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ABSTRACT

A study of the dialogue journal writing of six sixth grade students of English as a Second Language (ESL) examines the interaction with the teacher. The subjects had been in the United States for less than a year, and came from Korean, Vietnamese/Chinese, Burmese, and Italian language backgrounds. Data for the study were drawn from the students' dialogue journals and classroom observations and from interviews with the teacher and each student. The study is divided into three sections. In the first, dialogue journal interaction is placed within the classroom context, as a multilingual classroom management tool, and each student is profiled. The second section contains studies of the journal text, focusing on various aspects of discourse, including teacher strategies to promote student participation, teacher's questions, characteristics of the language input students receive in the teacher's entries, and patterns in the language functions used by the teacher and students. The third section documents the students' use of English grammatical morphemes, compares it with patterns found in previous studies of ESL morphology, and analyzes it across the ten months of writing in the journals. In addition, the linguistic factors influencing the use of the morphemes and the importance of individual learner strategies and language background in patterns of morpheme use are examined, and analytical issues are discussed. (MSE)

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Dialogue Writing: Analysis of Student-Teacher Interactive Writing in the Learning of English as a Second Language

NIE-G-83-0030

by

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with

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Washington, D. C.

December 1984

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DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY[1]

DIALOGUE WRITING: ANALYSIS OF STUDENT-TEACHER INTERACTIVE WRITING IN THE LEARNING OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

This study presents dialogue journal writing as an effective practice with students learning English as a second language (ESL) and analyzes the dialogue journal interaction of six sixth grade students who are beginning ESL learners and their teacher. A dialogue journal is a bound notebook in which students write regularly, as much as they wish and about anything they wish. The teacher responds to each student entry. Thus, they carry on a "conversation" in writing. The kinds of writing that occur can be as diverse as the students. They describe their activities, feelings and attitudes, ask questions, seek advice, argue their points, and even complain.

The data base for the study is the daily dialogue journal writing for a ten-month period (from September to June) of the six students and their teacher in a classroom in Los Angeles. The students are in a classroom of 27 students from 12 countries and 10 language backgrounds. The first languages of the students chosen for the study are: Korean (3), Vietnamese/Chinese (1), Burmese (1), and Italian (1). These students had been in the United States for less than one year when

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they began writing in dialogue journals. One student, from Vietnam, was not literate in his own language when he began writing in English. Four students are male, two female. Data collected during classroom observations and interviews with the teacher and each student complement the dialogue journal text.

The study is divided into three sections. Section I places the dialogue journal interaction within the classroom context. In one chapter the teacher explains the importance of the dialogue journal as a classroom management tool in this multilingual, multicultural classroom. A second chapter gives a detailed profile of each student, describes the student's progress during the year, and makes available substantial portions of the written text.

Section II consists of studies of the dialogue journal text, focusing on various aspects of the discourse. In one study strategies that the teacher employs to promote student participation in the journals and to support student writing are identified and discussed, and a method for determining the effectiveness of each strategy in this type of interaction is outlined. A second study focuses specifically on the teacher's questions, and finds questioning patterns in the journals that are quite different from those typically found in classroom discourse. Questions in the journals serve not to check student knowledge, but to support and advance the student's contribution, and thus promote critical thinking and writing development. A third study examines characteristics of the language input that individual students receive in the teacher's dialogue journal entries, and argues that the acquisitional processes that take place in the dialogue journal interaction resemble in many ways the process of oral language acquisition. We can conclude, therefore that reading and writing can be naturally acquired, in both first and second languages, in the process of meaningful interaction. A fourth study examines the language functions used by the teacher and the students in these journals, and compares patterns of function use found in these data to those found in the dialogue journals of native English speakers (from Staton, et al., 1982). This study identifies clear patterns in the teacher's use of language functions, as she adapts her language to the English proficiency level of the student, and also guides the students in the use of particular functions.

Section III documents the students' use of selected English grammatical morphemes in the journals. Chapter Eight, a cross-sectional, quantitative study, compares patterns of morpheme use among the individual students and with patterns found in previous studies of morphology in ESL, and finds a great deal of uniformity in these patterns. Chapter Nine, a more qualitative, longitudinal study, analyzes change over the ten months of writing in the use of each morpheme. This study also examines in more detail the linguistic factors that influence use of the morphemes and the importance of individual learner strategies and language background in patterns of morpheme use, and discusses important analytical issues that arise in the analysis of morphemes in dialogue journal text.

PREFACE

The research reported here was carried out under contract number NIE-G-0030 with the National Institute of Education, from September 30, 1983, to September 29, 1984. The aim of the project was to describe patterns of interaction and language acquisition in the dialogue journals of beginning ESL learners. This project grows out of an earlier study also funded by NIE, an analysis of the dialogue journals of native English speakers and the same teacher who participated in this study (Staton, Shuy, Kreeft and Reed, 1982).

As Principal Investigators, we wish to acknowledge especially the contributions of our co-investigators and authors, Jana Staton, Leslee Reed, and Robby Morroy. Jana Staton provided the initial impetus for this study. During the 1980-81 school year she collected the dialogue journal data for four of the students and conducted interviews with them and Mrs. Reed. She also helped establish the framework for the study and determine directions for analysis, as well as writing a chapter of this report. Most important, she first saw the tremendous power of dialogue journal writing as an educational practice and the richness of the writing of these students in the journals.

This project demonstrates the strength of practitioner/researcher collaboration. Mrs. Reed has spent many hours with us reflecting on her practice and our research findings as well as writing one of the chapters. Her participation broadens considerably the scope of this report, making it relevant to practitioners as well as researchers.

Robby Morroy was involved in the data extraction for the analysis of morphology and authored a chapter on teacher strategies. Madeline Adkins conducted much of the analysis for the chapter on teacher questions, and wrote portions of the student profiles.

The cooperation and encouragement of George Avak, the principal at Alexandria Avenue Elementary School, as well as the help of other school administrators and staff of the school and the Los Angeles Unified School District, who have now participated in two research studies of dialogue journals, is greatly appreciated. We are also grateful to the students in Room Eleven who made this research possible by opening their journals to us and giving us their observations and reactions, as well as to their parents, who gave their consent to the study.

Walt Wolfram of the Center for Applied Linguistics and Ralph Fasold at Georgetown University made insightful comments on early drafts of parts of the report. Young Song provided helpful information about the structure of Korean and Mya Myakin, about the structure of Burmese.

We are also grateful to the Center for Applied Linguistics for providing a place to conduct a second study of dialogue journal writing, and particularly to those who helped in the preparation of the report itself. Sundari Prahasto was instrumental in typing and organizing initial drafts, and Sonia Kundert's expertise in document preparation brought the report to its completion.

Although this is a long report, we have by no means said all there is to say about dialogue journal use with beginning ESL learners and the acquisitional patterns that can be expected. We hope, however, that by focusing on the classroom, the students, and the journal text

itself from a variety of perspectives, we have presented not only a study of English language acquisition in the journals per se, but also a multifaceted picture of the many dynamics involved in the dialogue journal process which contribute to effective interaction and second language acquisition. We hope also that we have laid the groundwork for future studies of second language acquisition in this rich source of data.

Joy Kreeft and Roger W. Shuy
Principal Investigators
Center for Applied Linguistics
December, 1984

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This report addresses two issues that currently challenge educators at elementary, secondary, and postsecondary levels across the United States: how to individualize instruction in language and culturally diverse classrooms in which many students have limited English proficiency and how to engage students who are nonnative English speakers in authentic, meaningful interaction and thus effectively develop their ability to communicate in English both orally and in writing. Regarding the first issue, the individualization of instruction, with the recent influx into the United States of students from non-English speaking countries, it is not uncommon in some school systems to find classrooms with students from a wide range of language, cultural, and educational backgrounds, with varying degrees of English proficiency. In such situations, it is difficult for teachers to learn about the individual abilities and needs of each student and then to construct curricula and classroom activivities to meet those needs. Too often a middle-of-the-road approach must be taken which neither challenges the more advanced nor reaches the less advanced student.

The second issue that this report addresses relates to current approaches to language teaching, whether in the elementary and secondary multilingual classroom or in the university English as a second language (ESL) classroom. Current research in the processes of second language acquisition suggests that the best environment for the acquisition of a second language is one in which there are ample opportunities for contextually rich, meaningful communication in the target language, much like the context in which a first language is acquired. Terms like "communicative competence," "meaningful interaction," and "real language" have become commonplace in second language research and theory. However, classroom researchers often find little evidence of authentic communication in the language classroom. The primary focus in many language classrooms has been the drilling of language patterns and the testing of students' facility with language forms, while the development of more complex areas of self-expression remain largely ignored. As Raimes (1983) points out,

> . . . the view of language as a tool for communication still lacks the dimension of language that was missing from the traditional paradigm—the view of language as it is related to thought and to the mind of the language user. . . . without . . . emphasis on purpose, on the mind and intention of the new language user, language teaching continues to foster learning rather than acquisition, drills rather than discourse, and accuracy rather than fluency. (p. 545)

Investigators of the writing process as well argue that the acquisition of skills related to the written language proceed in much the same way as does the acquisition of the spoken language, and that written language skills are also best acquired in the process of meaningful, written interaction. However, writing activities in many classrooms (in language learning classrooms as well as in classes for native English speakers) more often involve fill-in-the blank type exercises, which focus on basic skills—spelling, vocabulary, punctuation, and grammatical features—than the written expression of a real message to a real audience and the thinking, reasoning, and organizational skills necessary to adequately express that message. Applebee, et al. (1981), for example, observe that although 44% of the lesson time in six major subject areas in two high schools involved writing of some kind, only 3% of that time was spent in writing tasks of a paragraph or longer.

The study reported here grows out of an educational practice that makes it possible for teachers to individualize their instruction to meet the educational needs and language proficiency levels of all the students in their classes and provides a way for second language learners to engage in meaningful written interaction with a competent speaker of the target language, even within the classroom context. This practice is "dialogue journal writing." Dialogue journals are bound notebooks in which students write regularly (daily in this study) to a teacher about one or more topics of their own choosing, and the teacher writes back daily to each student--not to evaluate the student writing, but as an active participant in a written "conversation" that continues throughout the entire school term. The following exchange illustrates the nature of the interaction in one of the dialogue journals that provide data for this study. These particular entries come from the fifth month of dialogue journal writing between the sixth grade teacher in this study, Mrs. Reed, and Michael, a Burmese student who had been in the United States for just over a year at the time that this interaction was written (samples from the dialogue journals of all of the students in this study can be found in Chapter Two).

Michael: Mrs. Reed, you know on this week like the silly week. I don't know what happen on this week. Mrs. Reed, what did you mean about the Valentines you said we have to bring the Valentines. Did we have to made the Valentines for people in our classroom? I dont know what are you talking.

Mrs. Reed: No, we don't have to send anyone a Valentine. It is just a fun thing to do. Sometimes we like someone but we do not tell them. We feel funny telling someone we really like them. Giving a Valentine is an easy way of doing it. If you want to give a Valentine or fifty Valentines it doesn't matter. You do what you want about that.

Michael:	Mrs. Reed I know what is the valentine but I don't know what I have to do and the valentine is we have to give the cards to someone and I have to buy the cards but I can't buy the cards that is the problem. I think I'm not going to the sofeball becuse I did not do nothing about it and Ricardo said I could be the catcher and he break his primise.
Mrs. Reed:	No problem! Anyone who wants to give Valentines can. If you don't want to give Valentines you don't have to. Talk to Ricardo again! I'm sure he forgot his promise when others on the team began yelling at him. Did you ever find your pen?

This ongoing, daily writing consists of genuine and spontaneous interaction about topics that both the teacher and the students introduce and develop over time.

An earlier study funded by the National Institute of Education (NIE-G-80-0122), of the dialogue journal writing of Mrs. Reed and a sixth grade class of native English speakers in Los Angeles, California (Staton, et. at., 1982), outlines the key attributes of this interaction:

1. The writing is student-generated. Students write about topics and issues that interest and concern them, at their level of language proficiency. The teacher responds to each student's entry individually, accomodating to the language proficiency level of that student. The examples below show the interaction that occurred on one day in January in the dialogue journals of two nonnative English speaking students in the present study.

Less proficient student

Kemmy: today we spelling
today we drink allways

today we eat apple is good
I Like Mrs Reed and
I Like Mrs. W__ and I Like Mrs V__
and I Like school is good.

Mrs. Reed: Mrs. W__ could not come today.
Mrs. W__ will come on Tuesday.
Do you like the rain? Will we
play in the room at recess?

More proficient student

U Chal: Last year in Brazil my science teacher say even if the atoms of some thing are the same atoms of other thing but one is different of other because the atoms are in the different places.

Can the man cut the atom in two parts?

If the atoms are made with things small than the atoms why they stay using the atoms the small thing in the world?

What the thing small then the atoms is made?

What a atom of Uranion can do?

Mrs. Reed: If the atom is cut or smashed we get a mighty release of energy--which is very dangerous unless it is very controlled.

We are learning more about the atom. The atom is the smallest unit of matter. That tiny unit has parts to it that don't separate naturally.

We use uranium atoms in our nuclear power plants.

Mrs. Reed describes her accomodation to each student thus:

> Every time I read what a student writes I'm evaluating how much they're comprehending of what I wrote before, then I write according to what I feel they need at that moment—whether they need a direct response, or a response that is slightly more involved, or a really involved response, a response that leads to a higher level of thinking—a comparison or an analysis. . . . For a student who is just learning the language I try to keep sentences short and precise and easily understood and mostly focused on topics that the child knows or is aware of. So I'm using their environment, their vocabulary as much as possible. As they become more at ease with the language, I use more complex constructions and thoughts, until I get to the point where I'm writing, "Do you agree or disagree?" or "Why did you agree or disagree?"

Interview with Leslee Reed
November, 1983

2. The writing is interactive. It occurs on a regular basis (daily in the 1982 study and this one), with both participants having equal and frequent turns. Both participants are free to initiate topics of personal and mutual interest, with the expectation that the other will acknowledge the topic and comment on it, and both are free to seek and provide information.

3. The writing is functional. Both parties to the interaction are focused on communication rather than on form. The teacher, as well as the student, writes as a participant in a conversation in which a genuine message is communicated rather than evaluating or commenting on the student's language. The form of the message is rarely in focus, unless the meaning is incomprehensible or unclear. In fact, when Mrs. Reed began using dialogue journals with her students a number of years ago, it was not for the purpose of promoting second language acquisition. She was teaching native English speakers at the time, and her purpose was to find a way to communicate openly with them. This is still her reason for using dialogue journals, as she explains:

> It's just a way to communicate and to build each child's self image, so that each one realizes that they are valuable and they have great potential. By my "listening" through the journal, they realize they are valuable to me.
>
> Interview with Leslee Reed
> November, 1983

It is secondarily, in the process of the communication, that the teacher's writing can serve as a consistent, daily language model for the student within the context of the message being communicated, as the following example shows:

Michael: I think I am going to get more peanut or mix but
I don't know where I have to sales the peanut
and mix

Mrs. Reed: You and your brother could go to people . . . and ask them to buy trail mix or peanuts to help our school.
(Underlining added.)

4. The context for the interaction is non-threatening. Unlike oral, face-to-face interaction, students have the time to think about what they want to write and how to express themselves, and to make corrections as they go. The positive feedback that they receive in the teacher's entries encourages them and builds their confidence in their facility with the language.

Thus, the dialogue journal interaction provides the context which seems to be optimal for the acquisition of a second language, in both its oral and written forms. At the same time, the interaction carries with it a number of advantages to the teacher. The teacher has the satisfaction of seeing the growth that occurs over time in students' ability to express themselves in writing in the target language, and of knowing that he or she actively praticipated in that process on a daily basis. The dialogue journal writing also provides the teacher with data to assess students' language development in real-life interaction, rather than in a testing situation. Tests and assigned compositions provide information about students' more formal language productions and can be important for assessing to what extent students have learned particular language rules, but they do not always adequately reflect students' competence in non-test situations. Mrs. Reed finds the dialogue journal an adequate information source (at least initially) of a student's abilities: "I don't really have to test a child to know his learning level or level of ability to function in the language. I really don't need to know a child more than a few days before I know that." (interview, November, 1983).

As an innovative practice to be introduced into educational settings, dialogue journal writing has many advantages. The practice is adaptable to a wide range of educational situations and can be used with students at many levels, from kindergarten through adult education. The practice requires no new technology or equipment. Instead, the importance of the teacher as a facilitator of the interaction and as a model for students' thinking and self-expression is central to the success of the practice. At the same time, the practice does not require extensive re-training of the teacher. In fact, dialogue journal writing grew out of this teacher's own experience and desire to communicate with her students, and the communication skills that are so clearly effective in this teacher's writing developed over time, with no specific training.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this report is to document this teacher's practice of dialogue journal writing with beginning ESL learners. The report is designed to present, from a number of different perspectives, both information about the use of dialogue journals in the classroom and analyses of the text that Mrs. Reed and the students produced. The chapters in the report are therefore divided into three major sections, representing these perspectives. Section I presents the students' and teacher's perspective on how dialogue journals fit into the life of this multilingual classroom, and how they contribute to the social and language development of each student. Section II, based on analyses of the journal text, examines various features of the discourse that occur in the journals and particularly those features which are relevant to the process of second language acquisition. Section III, also an analysis of the text, documents the patterns of the students' acquisition of grammatical morphology as evidenced in their dialogue journal writing.

Setting for the study[1]

The data that form the basis for this study are the dialogue journal writing of a sixth grade teacher at Alexandria Avenue Elementary School in Los Angeles, California, and six of her students during the 1980-81 and 1981-82 school years. To provide background for the study we will describe below the population of the school and the classroom, the six students, and pertinent details about the dialogue journal data.

1. Alexandria Avenue Elementary School

As a result of the influx of immigrants into the United States beginning in the 1970's, public schools in Los Angeles, California have faced a rapidly growing population of nonnative English speaking students. During the 1983-84 school year, for example, 21% of the school children in Los Angeles spoke one of 104 languages better than English. 99% of the elementary schools consisted of students from two to three non-English language backgrounds; 15% of the schools had students from five or six non-English backgrounds; and 6% of the schools had students from over 15 different non-English backgrounds. The majority of these students are considered Limited English Proficient (LEP).

Alexandria Avenue Elementary School is one of the 6% of schools comprised of students from a wide range of native language backgrounds. Located in the mid-Wilshire/east Hollywood area of Los Angeles, the school services a complex linguistic community with the highest number of LEP students in the entire city. Of the school population of 1260 students during the 1983-84 school year, approximately 65% were LEP, and about 90% of their parents were LEP. The school is located in the heart of the Central American community in Los Angeles, bordered on the west by an Armenian community and on the south by a Korean community. Over 30 language groups are represented in the school; approximately 65% of the students are Hispanic; about 10% are from South Korea; 13% come from Soviet Armenia. The other 12% represent more than thirty language groups: Arabic, Burmese, Ceylonese, Cantonese, other Chinese, Nicaraguan Creole, Danish, French, German, Greek, Gujarate, Guarani, Hebrew, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Khmer, Lao, Mayan, Ilocano, Tagalog, other Philippine, Portuguese, Romanian, Serbo-Croatian, Taiwanese, Thai, Urdu, Vietnamese and others.

2. Population of "Room Eleven"

Mrs. Reed's classroom is affectionately referred to as "Room Eleven" by her and the students. The population of Room Eleven for the 1980-81 school year, similar in composition to the 1981-82 population, is summarized in Figure 1.1. There were 27 students, 16 males and 11 females, born in twelve different countries, and speaking ten different languages at home. The amount of time spent in schools in the United States at the beginning of the school year in which the study took place ranged from none to six years (eight students started school here). Most of the students were considered Proficient or Functional English Speaking. Five students were considered Non- or Limited English Speaking and received extra help in class from aides and from Mrs. Reed. The majority, but not all, of the parents were blue-collar workers, as shown by this representative list of parents' occupations: factory worker, cook, dishwasher, waiter, owner of a sign shop, mechanic, clerk, construction worker, plumber, service station attendant, baker, seamstress, educational aide and student at Los Angeles Community College, Professor at the University of Southern California.

Country of Birth	Number of Students
Mexico	6
U.S.	5
Korea	4
El Salvador	3
Philippines	2
Puerto Rico	1
Italy	1
Vietnam	1
Taiwan	1
Israel	1
Burma	1
Germany	1
Home Language	
Spanish	13
Korean	4
Tagalog	2
Cantonese	2
Italian	1
Mandarin Chinese	1
Arabic	1
Burmese	1
German/English	1
English	1
Time in U.S. Schools	
1 year or less	4
2 years	5
3 years	5
4 years	4
5 years	1
6 years	8

Figure 1.1. Population of "Room Eleven" 1980-81 school year.

3. Subjects in the study

The students chosen from Room Eleven for this study, listed in Figure 1.2 by the names that will be used to refer to them throughout the report, were eleven to twelve years of age at the time of the study and all except Kemmy were literate in their native language. All of them had been assessed by the school as Non- or Limited English Speaking at the beginning of the study. The major criterion for selection of students for the study was amount of time spent in the United States when the study began, so that these students were chosen precisely because they had spent less than one year in schools in the United States. Because only four students from the 1980-81 classroom met the criterion, two additional students were chosen from the 1981-82 class.

Student	Country of Birth	First/Home Language	Length of Time in U.S. Schools at Beginning of Journal School Year
1980-81 Classroom:			
"Michael"	Burma	Burmese	8 months (arr. 1-80)
"Laura"	Italy	Italian	5 months (arr. 4-80)
"Su Kyong"	Korea	Korean	0 months (arr. 10-80)
"U Chal"	Korea	Korean	6 months (arr. 3-80)
1981-82 Classroom:			
"Andy"	Korea	Korean	3 months (arr. 5-81)
"Kemmy"	China	Chinese (Hong Kong)	3 months (arr. Spr. 81)

Figure 1.2. Students in the study.

The reason for establishing this criterion in choosing the subjects was that one purpose of the research was to analyze change over time in the dialogue journal writing--in the patterns of interaction and teacher strategies used, in the expression of language functions, and in the acquisition of English grammatical morphemes. To do this, it seemed optimal to choose students who were most likely to show change during the ten months of the study (what Tarone, Frauenfelder and Selinker, 1976, term Type II subjects, characterized by instability or change over time). A student who has been attending English-speaking schools for a few years may have already reached a proficiency and communicative level that has stabilized and, even if not native, may not demonstrate much change during the ten months of the study.

The students can be divided into three levels of English ability:

Most proficient	U Chal
Medium proficiency	Michael
	Andy
Least proficient	Laura
	Su Kyong
	Kemmy

These divisions are the result of the teacher's ratings (based on the students' classroom performance, dialogue journal writing, and scores on the Survey of Essential Skills Test administered near the end of their sixth-grade school year), and verified by us after preliminary analysis of the dialogue journals. The scores on the Survey of Essential Skills (SES) are provided in Figure 1.3 (for everyone except Andy, whose scores are not available).

	Reading	Math	Language
U Chal	90%	93%	72%
Michael	60	83	60
Laura	50	37	45
Su Kyong	29	64	40
Kemmy	48	44	50

(100% on the test means that the student is working at grade level. A student who scores below 60% needs extra help.)

Figure 1.3. Student SES Scores—end of sixth grade year.

Since Kemmy was non-literate in both his native language and English when he started school, he could not be tested at the end of his first year. He was kept in Mrs. Reed's class for a second year, and the

SES scores shown here were obtained at the end of the second year. His scores for the year in which his journal was studied would have been much lower.

Su Kyong was also kept in Mrs. Reed's class for a second year. However, she could be tested at the end of the first year, and these scores are reported here. Her scores improved dramatically the second year: Reading 77%; Math, 89% and Language, 77%.

Assessment of each student's English language proficiency, based on the Basic Inventory of Natural Language (BINL), available for four of the students, is given in Figure 1.4. The BINL was given to Michael, U Chal, and Laura when they arrived in the United States, and to Su Kyong one year later.

	Arrival in U.S.	Date of BINL	BINL score
U Chal	3-80	1980	FES
Michael	1-80	1980	NES
Laura	4-80	1980	NES
Su Kyong	10-80	1981	LES

FES = Functional English Speaking; LES = Limited English Speaking; NES = Non-English Speaking

Figure 1.4. BINL scores for the subjects.

The dialogue journal data

It must be pointed out that the dialogue journal writing was not done for the purpose of this study. Mrs. Reed has been writing in dialogue journals with her students for a number of years, and she continued the practice with the students in this classroom. The study was designed and the journals collected after the writing had been completed (in the case of the 1980-81 data) or after the writing had already begun (in the 1981-82 class).

Each student wrote in the journal every day during the ten months of the school year, from September through June, and the teacher wrote back to each student every night. The journals are 7" X 8½" bound composition books of around 35 pages. The total number of journals that each student completed ranges from two to six, and the total number of interactions (each student entry plus a teacher response counts as one interaction) ranges from 81 to 164, as shown in Figure 1.5. The range from student to student in number of interactions is due to variation in the number of days a student was absent, now early or late the student started the school year, and how early or late the student established a regular routine of writing. Laura and Su Kyong, the two students with the most limited English proficiency, at first had trouble writing regularly.

Student	Number of Journals	Number of Interactions
Andy	6+	164
Michael	4	151
U Chal	3	166
Laura	3	126
Su Kyong	2	87
Kemmy	2	81

Figure 1.5. Number of journals and interactions in the study.

Written permission was obtained from the school principal, the students, and their parents to photocopy the students' entire journals for later analysis. The permission letters were translated into the native language of the parents (see Appendix I of this chapter for examples of permission letters).

Once the journals were photocopied, each interaction was numbered consecutively throughout the journal. Thus, the student's first entry was labeled S-1; the teacher's response, T-1; the student's next entry, S-2, and so on. For the analysis discussed in Chapters Four, Seven, Eight, and Nine, three samples of writing, each twenty interactions long (twenty student entries and twenty teacher entries), were chosen. Chapter Six uses as data the first ten interactions from the same three samples. (Details on the samples from each student's journal are in Appendix II of this chapter.) The samples were taken from the fall, winter, and spring. The attempt was made to begin the first sample around October 1, after the students had been in school for about three weeks and had established the routine of writing. The last sample ended around the end of May, about two weeks before school ended. It seemed desirable not only to divide the year evenly for each student, but to keep the time frame as similar as possible among the students. However, since Andy, Su Kyong and Kemmy started the year late, the first sample for them starts later in the year than for the other students. For a couple of students the sample period was extended beyond twenty student entries because the student wrote some entries with no teacher response and it was considered desirable to have student-teacher interactions as much as possible, rather than a series of student entries with no teacher response.

In addition to the journals, other data were collected to serve as background for the journal analysis. Background information includes assessment of the students' English proficiency as determined by the Basic Inventory of Natural Language (BINL), each student's grades during the year of the study, the results of the SWRL Survey of Essential Skills (made up of reading, writing, math tests and a letter composed by the student), the teacher's assessment of the student's in-class participation and progress during the year, and information on the language, cultural, educational, and family background of each student in the study. Also, to obtain an understanding of how dialogue journal writing fits into the life of the classroom studied, three days were spent in the school, observing the classroom and interviewing the teacher and some of the students involved in the study.

Summary of the chapters

To guide the reading of this report, the chapters are summarized here. Section I places the dialogue journal writing within the context of the classroom. In Chapter Two, "Profiles of the Students in the Study," Kreeft and Adkins have compiled data from observations of Room Eleven during the years that the journals were collected, from interviews with the students in the study and with Mrs. Reed, and from the dialogue journals themselves to provide a profile of each student. The purpose of the chapter is to present the students as individuals, a perspective that is necessarily lost in the analytical chapters of the report, and to demonstrate the different purposes that the dialogue journal interaction serves for each student and the overall development that can be found in each student's journal.

Chapter Three, "Dialogue Journals--An Important Classroom Management Tool," gives the teacher's perspective on dialogue journal use. In it the classroom teacher, Leslee Reed, discusses the important place that dialogue journals play in her multilingual classroom in a way that no amount of researcher observation or analysis could ever produce. Mrs. Reed sees the dialogue journals as contributing to classroom management in the following ways:

1. as an aid to lesson planning

2. as a way to individualize instruction

3. as a source of information about students' culture, activities, and needs

4. as a means for students to express themselves freely

5. as a private channel for honest communication

6. as a means for resolving difficult classroom situations.

Mrs. Reed's discussion is not confined to the dialogue journals of the students in this study, but she draws on her many years' experience using dialogue journals with a wide range of students, and opens up to us the journals of many students whom she has taught during the past few years. Mrs. Reed concludes that dialogue journal writing is the most important tool that she has for keeping her classroom flowing smoothly and such an integral part of her teaching that she doubts she could function effectively without them.

Section II focuses on features of the discourse in the journals—the various strategies that Mrs. Reed uses to keep the interaction going and to promote student writing, specific features of the language input that the students receive in the journals, and the language functions used by the students and Mrs. Reed. A major concern of practitioners using dialogue journals is how to keep the interaction going over long periods of time, so that in the process of interacting students' skills in communicating, thinking, and writing are enhanced and developed. In Chapter Four, "Teacher Strategies: Their Effect on Student Writing," Morroy examines the particular strategies used by Mrs. Reed in the journals to sustain the interaction and to facilitate the development of topics that the students introduce. Morroy points out that the most important strategy for promoting student participation is an overall "global strategy" of allowing the students to select the topics to be discussed. The dialogue journal interaction must be student-generated, and this feature charactizes every dialogue journal analyzed in this study. Besides this global strategy, there are various "local strategies," used with varying frequency and effectiveness with individual students. Morroy identifies nine such strategies, including: asking information and opinion questions; elaborating and adding information; changing the topic within a larger topic framework; and drawing generalizations from statements made by the student.

Morroy argues that these strategies do indeed promote student interaction in the journals, and he proposes a method for evaluating the effectiveness of each strategy, by analyzing: the frequency of student responses when the various strategies are used, the elaborative details provided in the response, and the syntactic complexity and cohesiveness of each response.

In Chapter Five, "Dialogue Journals as a Means of Enabling Written Language Acquisition," Staton analyzes features of the language input that the students receive from the teacher in the journals. She argues that the process of learning to read and write can be much like the natural, functional, interactive process operative in the acquisition of spoken (or signed) language as it occurs between caretakers and children in non-school settings. The three factors that enable first language acquisition—the "language acquisition device," which all learners possess; the use of the surrounding physical and social context to give meaning to language; and the presence of clear, comprehensible language input—are also operative in the acquisition of literacy skills, even in contexts in which these skills are not "taught."

Staton analyzes one of these factors—the presence of clear, comprehensible input—in the teacher's writing to four readers of varying levels of English proficiency. Her analysis provides empirical evidence that in her dialogue journal writing, this teacher is sensitive to the linguistic ability of her interlocutor and modifies her writing accordingly, in the same manner that has been found in previous studies of adult-child and native speaker-nonnative speaker interaction. Thus the teacher's dialogue journal writing fulfills the requirements for optimal input (outlined by Krashen, 1982) which promotes subconscious language acquisition.

Until very recently, the primary approach to literacy acquisition in our culture has been to relegate it to formal instruction in the school, where there is a focus on language forms and decontextualized writing exercises. However, Staton's discussion and the supporting evidence provided in this chapter make clear that the dialogue journal interaction, when it is functional, about student-generated topics, and continued over a sufficient time period, creates the necessary conditions for the development of written language competence in much the same way that oral interaction provides the conditions for the acquisition of spoken competence.

Although there is growing interest in the importance of functional competence as a key aspect of language acquisition, few empirical, quantitative studies of ESL learners' emerging functional competence have appeared. In Chapter Six, "The Function of Language Functions in the Dialogue Journal Interactions of Nonnative English Speakers and Their Teacher," Shuy reports the results of his study of the language functions used by the students and Mrs. Reed in the dialogue journals. Shuy categorizes the functions, determines the range of functions used in each journal, and ranks the functions according to frequency of use. He finds that there is a great deal of similarity among the students as far as which functions are used most frequently and in the rank orders of the most frequently used functions. Variability in the use of functions lies in the total range of functions used by each student, related to the student's level of English proficiency. The more competent the student is, the wider the range of functions that is used, and the more the student's use of language functions approximates that of the teacher.

For the teacher's use of language functions, Shuy finds considerable variability in both the total range of functions and the frequency of certain types of functions used with each student. This variability is influenced primarily by the level of English proficiency of the student and the language functions that the student uses. When Shuy compares the teacher's language functions in the journals of these nonnative English speakers to those used with a sixth grade class of native English speakers (using data from Staton, et al., 1982), he finds considerable variability between the two groups. He finds that this teacher has an implicit theory of communication, teaching, and learning that guides her language function use both in accommodating to each student's level of English proficiency and in influencing the student's range of language functions. In this chapter, we have for the first time quantitative evidence for the thresholds of student language functions expected by the teacher as well as thresholds of language functions used by the teacher in response to her students' writing.

In Chapter Seven, "The Importance of Teacher Questions in Written Interaction," Kreeft compares the question asking patterns of Mrs. Reed in the dialogue journals to patterns for teacher questions found in numerous studies of classroom interaction and finds them to be very different. Rather than dominate the question asking, Kreeft finds that the teacher shares with the students the power to ask questions. Rather than use questions to determine which topics are discussed, the teacher relinquishes her role as the initiator of topics and instead uses questions to continue topics that the students have initiated. Rather than test the students' knowledge and ability to express themselves, with display questions, she asks "real" questions, about things that she wants to know. The result is a naturally flowing interaction, focused on topics that the students introduce, rather than the kind of teacher-initiated, three-part exchange consistantly found in classrooms.

Kreeft also analyzes the form and type of the teacher's questions to each student and finds considerable individual variation in both. There is also variability in the form and type of questions asked of these nonnative English speakers and those asked in the journals of native English speakers (data come from Staton et al., 1982).

The third area of investigation in this chapter is the changes in the students' writing that may result from the teacher's questions. The students generally respond to more questions, ask more questions, and continue writing about more topics for several turns at the end of the year than they do at the beginning. Kreeft argues therefore that dialogue journal writing provides the opportunity to depart from the interaction patterns that prevail in classrooms and for the teacher to adjust questions to the language level of the student. Thus, in the journals, the teacher can "teach" students to interact in writing, guiding them toward becoming more fluent communicators and writers.

Section III examines the acquisition of the forms of English over time as evidenced in the dialogue journals, focusing on the acquisition of grammatical morphology. In Chapter Eight, in a cross-sectional analysis, Kreeft compares patterns of morpheme use among the individual students in the study and to patterns found in previous studies of English grammatical morphology, primarily in speech. Chapter Nine consists of a detailed longitudinal analysis, in which Kreeft documents change over time in the use of the morphemes and examines the various factors influencing morpheme use in this written medium. The two chapters in this section not only provide the first documentation of the acquisition of language forms in the dialogue journals of beginning ESL learners, but also address important methodological issues that arise in the analysis of patterns of language acquisition in written data.

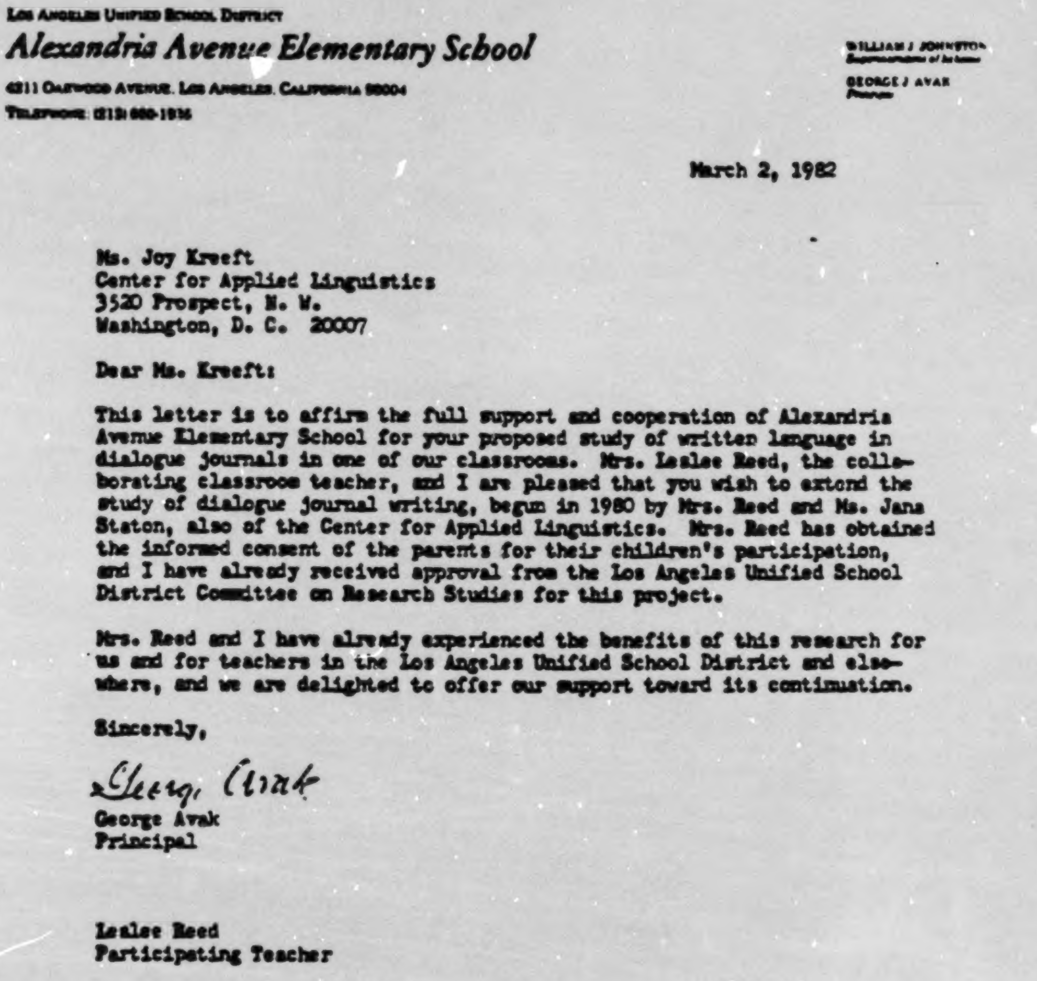
Note to Chapter One

[1] Sources of information about the Los Angeles Public Schools and Alexandria Avenue Elementary School are: Mr. George Avak, Principal, Alexandria Avenue Elementary School; Mr. Don McCann, Bilingual Coordinator, Alexandria Avenue Elementary School; Ms. Linda Pursell, Unit Coordinator, Research and Evaluation, Bilingual Evaluation Unit, Los Angeles Unified School District.

Appendix I: Permission Letters

1. Letter from school principal allowing the study to be conducted
2. Permission letter to parents
3. Translation of permission letter into Mandarin Chinese

1. Letter from school principal allowing the study to be conducted.



Los Angeles Unified School District
Alexandria Avenue Elementary School
4211 Oakwood Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90004
Telephone (213) 660-1936

William J Johnston
Superintendent of Schools
George J Avak
Principal

March 2, 1982

Ms. Joy Kreeft
Center for Applied Linguistics
3520 Prospect, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20007

Dear Ms. Kreeft:

This letter is to affirm the full support and cooperation of Alexandria Avenue Elementary School for your proposed study of written language in dialogue journals in one of our classrooms. Mrs. Leslee Reed, the collaborating classroom teacher, and I are pleased that you wish to extend the study of dialogue journal writing, begun in 1980 by Mrs. Reed and Ms. Jana Staton, also of the Center for Applied Linguistics. Mrs. Reed has obtained the informed consent of the parents for their children's participation, and I have already received approval from the Los Angeles Unified School District Committee on Research Studies for this project.

Mrs. Reed and I have already experienced the benefits of this research for us and for teachers in the Los Angeles Unified School District and elsewhere, and we are delighted to offer our support toward its continuation.

Sincerely,

George Avak

George Avak
Principal

Leslee Reed
Participating Teacher

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

2. Permission letter to parents.

Dear parents of students in Room 11:

Room 11 has a special program for developing student abilities in using oral and written language to express their ideas and concerns. This program is of great interest to many other teachers. Mrs. Leslee Reed is now involved in an exciting project to develop materials for training other teachers to work more effectively with students who speak two languages.

The project will help the students to understand their school tasks better, and will give them additional practice in using English language skills. The project will not take any time from the regular instructional program.

Because some of the students' written work will be collected to be published as examples, we need permission for your child to be involved in this project. We want you to know that your child will not be identified by name in any of the materials.

We feel very honored that our school and students have been chosen to be involved in this project, which will not only help them, but others as well. Your cooperation in allowing your child to participate is completely voluntary.

If you have further questions, please contact Mrs. Reed at the school.

If you are willing to allow your child to be involved in the project, please sign the consent form and return it to the school.

Sincerely,

George Avak, Principal

Leslee Reed, Teacher

I have read the request for permission for my child to participate in the language project of Room 11.

____________________________ (student's name) has my permission to

be a part of this project. ____
(signature/date)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

3. Translation of permission letter into Mandarin Chinese.

親愛的第十一室學生家長；

為了發展學生表達思想的會話和寫作的能力，第十一室有個特別的工作計劃。許多老師對這個計劃都都有特別的興趣。Leslee Reed 太太現在正在編教料材。這個教材是用来訓練老師更加有效地教導學生。

這個計劃不但能幫助學生了解學校的工作，而且給他们更多的机會去練習英文。這個工作計劃不會影响到工常的課程時間。

由於一些學生的文章會被用在教材裡，當作例子，因此我们必須得到您们的許可。學生和學校的名字是不會出現在教材裡的。

我们學校和學生能被選到參加這份工作計劃，覺得十分榮幸。這份計劃不但助益我们的學生，將來也會助益他人。准許您们的孩子參加這個計劃完全是志願性質。如果您有别的問題請連繫 Reed 太太。

如果您願意准許您的孩子參加這個計劃，請在下頁的表格上簽名，然後送給學校。

誠懇地
校長 George Avak
教師 Leslee Reed.

我已經讀過這封要求我准許我的孩子去參加第十一室語言計劃的信。

______________（學生姓名）業已經過我们的許可去參加這個工作計劃。

Appendix II: Journal samples analyzed

Student	Dates	Interaction Numbers	
Andy	Oct. 12 - Nov. 10	S-4	S-23
	Feb. 1 - March 15	S-67	S-86
	April 28 - May 29	S-129	S-153
Laura	Oct. 1 - Nov. 3	S-7	S-26
	Feb. 2 - March 10	S-61	S-80
	April 21 - May 28	S-102	S-121
U Chal	Oct. 1 - Oct. 28	S-10	S-29
	Feb. 2 - March 9	S-82	S-101
	April 30 - May 28	S-134	S-153
Michael	Oct. 1 - Oct. 29	S-8	S-27
	Feb. 2 - March 6	S-76	S-95
	April 30 - May 29	S-125	S-144
Su Kyong	Nov. 14 - Jan. 16	S-7	S-26
	Feb. 2 - March 16	S-34	S-53
	March 30 - May 27	S-62	S-83
Kemmy	Dec. 7 - Jan. 19	S-4	S-23
	Feb. 1 - March 8	S-29	S-48
	March 25 - May 12	S-60	S-79

CHAPTER TWO

PROFILES OF THE STUDENTS IN THE STUDY

Joy Kreeft and Madeline Adkins

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce to the reader the six students whose dialogue journals provide the data for the studies in this report and to make available substantial portions of their dialogue journal writing. An issue that we continually face in doing research on dialogue journal writing is that once we have decided on a research focus, performed an analysis, and presented results, we have lost the rich flavor of the written text and what it tells us about the students who produced it, which inspired our analysis in the first place. The only way to truly impart that flavor would be to include the entire journal of each student and the taped interviews with the students and Mrs. Reed as part of the report. That being impossible, a brief profile of each student is presented here. The sources of information from which each profile is drawn are: observations of the 1980-81 and 1981-82 classrooms, interviews with Mrs. Reed and the students in the two classes, and most important, the dialogue journal texts themselves. A sample of each student's dialogue journal is provided at the end of the discussion of that student--two pages xeroxed from the journal and a typed transcript of a two-week exchange (ten interactions). In choosing text samples, an attempt was made to find a time of the year when the students seemed to be involved in the writing and to choose from the same time period for each student. This turned out to be early February (the beginning of the "Winter" sample in the analytical chapters). As we will see in both the dialogue journal texts and the discussion, the progress that each student makes during the year is very different, and for each student, the dialogue journal serves a different purpose.

> The most exciting journals are those of students who are in transition. I like to watch their movement, their growth, and I like to feed them words and ideas that move them into more thinking.
>
> Interview with Leslee Reed
> 11-17-83

U CHAL

U Chal's dialogue journal is representative of the kind of written interaction that can occur with a bright, motivated student who has had a rich educational and language background. U Chal was born in Korea, but moved to Sao Paulo, Brazil when he was five years old and spent seven years there before he came to the United States. In Brazil, he attended a private school and studied English for one year. Thus, he could speak (but not read or write) Korean, could speak, read and write Portuguese, and could speak, read and write some English when he entered Mrs. Reed's classroom.

U Chal lived near the school in a neighborhood with a mixture of languages. Throughout the school year, he was active in a Korean church group and spoke Korean at home. In class, however, he spoke only English even with the other Korean students, unless Mrs. Reed asked him to help them with their work, when he would speak Korean.

In class he was a motivated, goal-oriented if very reserved learner. Because he was shy and didn't want to make mistakes in English, at the beginning of the year he spoke very little. He didn't initiate conversations and answered questions very briefly, preferring to avoid talk entirely. By the end of the year he talked freely with other boys in the class and gave oral reports in front of class.

When asked what her goals were for U Chal during the year, Mrs. Reed replied that she wanted to "fuel the furnace"; to make accessible to him as much information as possible, because he quickly soaked it up. He sat at the front of the room, participated actively in class activities, and read enthusiastically, looking for extra materials and taking unassigned textbooks home to read. He started the year in an average reading group, but soon moved to the top group, even though he was still in the process of learning English. He experienced rapid progress in all of his school subjects and his SES scores (all above 90%) show that he was working at nearly sixth grade level at the end of the year (see Chapter One).

U Chal's sincerity and desire to learn are evident in his dialogue journal writing as well. Although throughout the year his entries are often very short, simply fulfilling the minimum requirement of three sentences, this does not mean, as it might for some students, that he was not interested in communicating. He was eager to communicate in the journal, even at the beginning of the year when he was reluctant to speak to anyone in class. One sign of this is the number of questions that he asks. At the beginning of the year he asks more questions than any other student. Below is his first dialogue journal entry.

S-1[1] *What Latitude in Longitud help the men?*
Sept.
19 *Why the cuban coming to U.S.?*

I live in Brazil seven year in five in Koreia,
I firty in Koreia, I have five year. I go to
Brazil, I come to U.S.

In his journal, U Chal not only asks Mrs. Reed all about her background and about things they have been learning in class, but he is the most consistently responsive of all the students in the study, answering almost every question she asks him. Mrs. Reed encourages this communication by answering his questions in simple, clear sentences and asking him many questions on the topics he introduces.

U Chal has a wide range of interests and experiences, which he loves to write about. For example:

S-85 *I never read about Fahrenheit until I come to U.S., the first time I come I saw a film of doctor and they find that I monkey had a fever and when he got the fever his body temperature was 115 degree F but I thought they was talking about 115 degree C but now I know the different of Celsuis and Fahrenheit.*

I know and I read that scientist was stunding about dolphins language. Last year when I was in Brazil I was in the beach and I saw a dophin dead on the sand and when I touch the skin is like sofet and then when I eat the lunch and I go to see the dolphin some birds was eating the dolphin.

T-85 *The dolphins have even been trained to do undersea work for the Navy. They seem to have an intelligence. The birds help to clean the beach by eating the dead animals. The dolphin's skin has no scales--we expect an animal that looks like a fish to have scales.*

He is also good at sustaining a topic over a number of entries. In the following example from the spring sample, Mrs. Reed and U Chal carry on a conversation for three days about getting hit by a ball, which looks a lot like a face-to-face conversation two friends might have.

T-142 *. . . How does your face feel? That ball bounced off of your hand right into your face. I do hope your face isn't bruised. . . .*

S-143 *It didn't hurt much I had bad bumps in my head before . . . Today was Jung An turn to get the ball on his face.*

T-143 *Good! I was glad to see you this morning and see that you did not have a black eye or a swollen nose! I'll check Jung An in the morning to see if he has a black eye! We are learning to catch balls in an unusual way!*

S-144 *I think that the ball didn't hurt to much to Jung An because it was a rubber ball.*

T-144 *Rubber balls aren't as hard. Usually rubber balls aren't thrown as hard as softballs either. . . .*

This kind of free discussion is quite different from the forced interactions that can occur with some students, whose English is more limited or who do not have the desire to communicate to this extent.

The discussions in U Chal's journal cover some very interesting topics:

S-63 *Last year in Brazil my science teacher say even if the atoms of some thing are the same atoms of other thing but one is different of other because the atoms are in the different places.*

Can the man cut the atom in two parts?

If the atoms are made wit things small then the atoms why they stay using the atoms the small thing in the world?

What the thing small then the atoms is made?

What a atom of Uranion can do?

T-63 *If the atom is cut or smashed we get a mighty release of energy--which is very dangerous unless it is very controlled.*

We are learning more about the atom. The atom is the smallest unit of matter. That tiny unit has parts to it that don't separate naturally.

We use uranium atoms in our nuclear power plants.

S-64 *Does we go to study more about atoms?*

Last year I did a expirement to separet the water to hydogin and oxgine, the class divide in 5 group and only one group separet the water.

T-64 *Yes! We will learn about more elements. How did you separate hydogen from the water molecule?*

Probably due to U Chal's language background, his journal shows dramatic progress in the acquisition of English grammatical forms (details on each student's progress with grammatical morphology are given in Chapter Nine). His verb forms, for example, are quite limited at the beginning of the year. These examples are extracted from the fall sample.

S-10 *In what age you start work? How mann year you live in Los Angeles?*

S-11 *I live in Los Angeles six month.*

S-12 *In what age you stop to study?*

By the winter sample U Chal correctly uses many past tense forms, although he shifts between the past and present tense in the course of one narrative.

S-85 *I never read about Fahrenheit until I come to U.S., the first time I come I saw a film of doctor and they find that I monkey had a fever and when he got the fever his body temperature was 115 degree F but I thought they was talking about 115 degree C but now I know the different of Celsuis and Fahrenheit.*

I know and I read that scientist was stunding about dolphins language. Last year when I was in Brazil I was in the beach and I saw a dophin dead on the sand and when I touch the skin is like sofet and then when I eat the lunch and I go to see the dolphin some birds was eating the dolphin.

By the spring sample his use of past and present tense verbs is consistently correct and he is even using complex verbs such as negative, subjunctive and perfective constructions with relative ease:

S-140 *The numbers you chose are 1 and 2.*

My Mother told me yesterday that she don't like Virgil so she want to put me into Columbus if I could.

I like math puzzles my favorit lesson is math.

I loved the ICAP program and now I don't know if I would like this one or the Harmonik Corde.

S-141 *Saturday my Karate teacher was fighting with 5 student and one of them almost got his arm broke.*

I didn't know how to put the ing in the words because you didn't teach me.

U Chal's comments during an interview about dialogue journal writing at the end of the school year, parts of which are reproduced below, give more information about him and also provide insights into the possible benefits of dialogue journals for all students.

Staton: *What do you think about the journals?*

U Chal: *It's better than talking, because I can't say some words to Mrs. Reed. I can't say what I say in the journal in front of the class, because I get nervous and I can't say the words.*

Staton: *Is there anything that you don't like about the journal?*

U Chal: *That I have to write every day. Sometimes I don't have anything to say, and I think and I think, and sometimes I write something really dumb.*

Staton: *What kinds of things do you usually write about?*

U Chal: *If I have a problem in the lesson, I ask her to explain to me how to do it again. And if I don't get it, she tells me she'll help me when she has time.*

Staton: *Did you write much at the beginning of the year?*

U Chal: *At the first of the year, I wrote only three questions each day, but now I like to write more, and I have a lot of things to tell her about me and about my family.*

Staton: *When did you start writing more?*

U Chal: *When I was knowing more about her, and I was having more questions to ask her and I was telling her about myself too.*

Staton: *What is important to know about a teacher?*

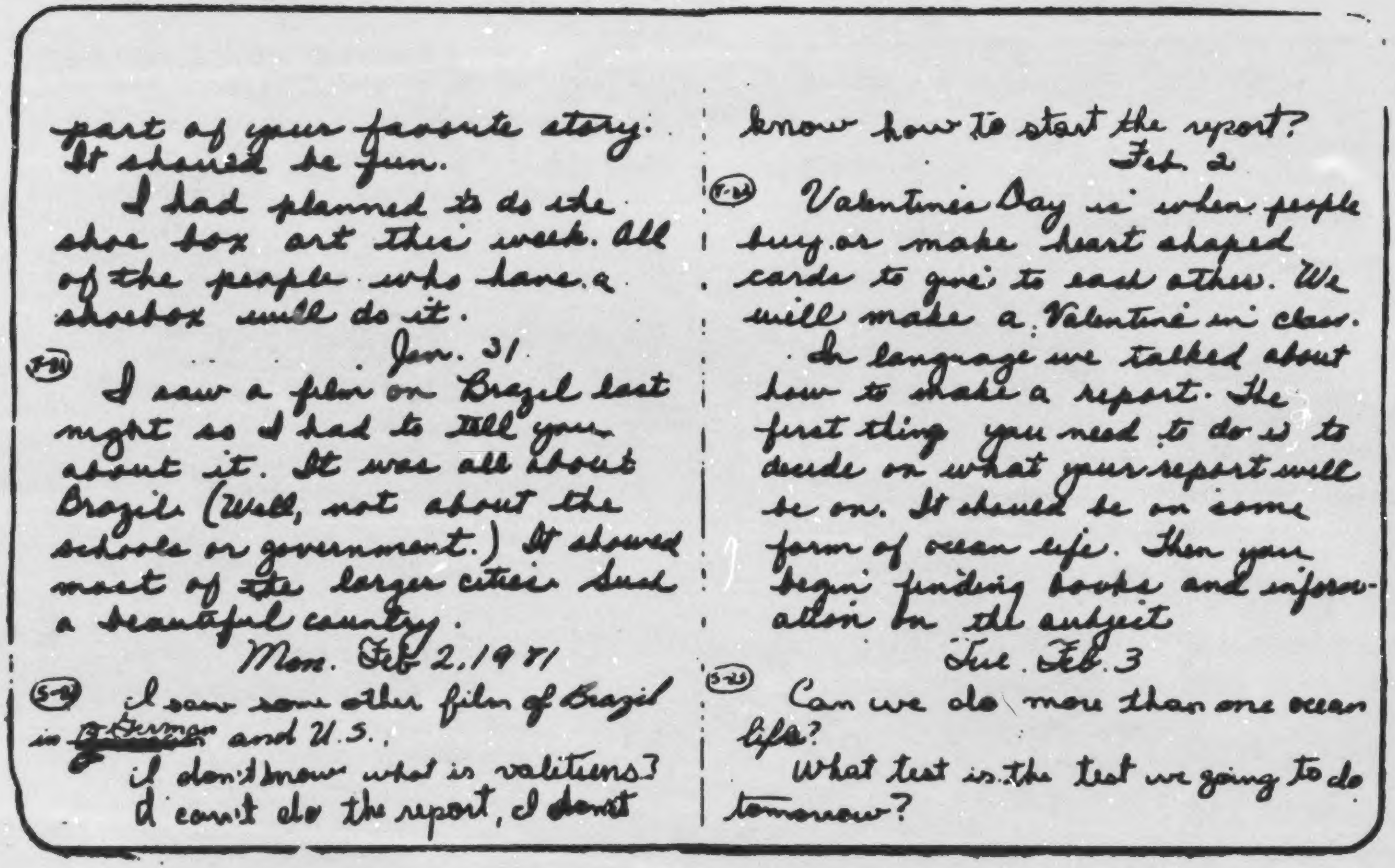
U Chal: *To be friends. Not only to learn, but to be a friend with the teacher, to understand her.*

Staton: *How is the journal writing different from other in-class writing?*

U Chal: *She wants us to learn how to write in the right way, and not to correct us every time that we get something wrong. We learn ourselves how to correct our writing and spelling.*

Staton: *How do you learn that?*

U Chal: *When she writes back and when I read I learn, because when she writes, I remember what she writes and I write it correct.*



part of your favorite story. It should be fun.

I had planned to do the shoe box art this week. All of the people who have a shoebox will do it.

Jan. 31

(T-20) I saw a film on Brazil last night so I had to tell you about it. It was all about Brazil (Well, not about the schools or government.) It showed most of the larger cities. Such a beautiful country.

Mon. Feb 2, 1971

(S-21) I saw some other film of Brazil in German and U.S.,

I don't know what is valitiens?

I can't do the report, I don't know how to start the report?

Feb. 2

(T-22) Valentine's Day is when people buy or make heart shaped cards to give to each other. We will make a Valentine in class.

In language we talked about how to make a report. The first thing you need to do is to decide on what your report will be on. It should be on some form of ocean life. Then you begin finding books and information on the subject

Tue. Feb. 3

(S-23) Can we do more than one ocean life?

What test is the test we going to do tomorrow?

U Chal--Dialogue journal facsimile

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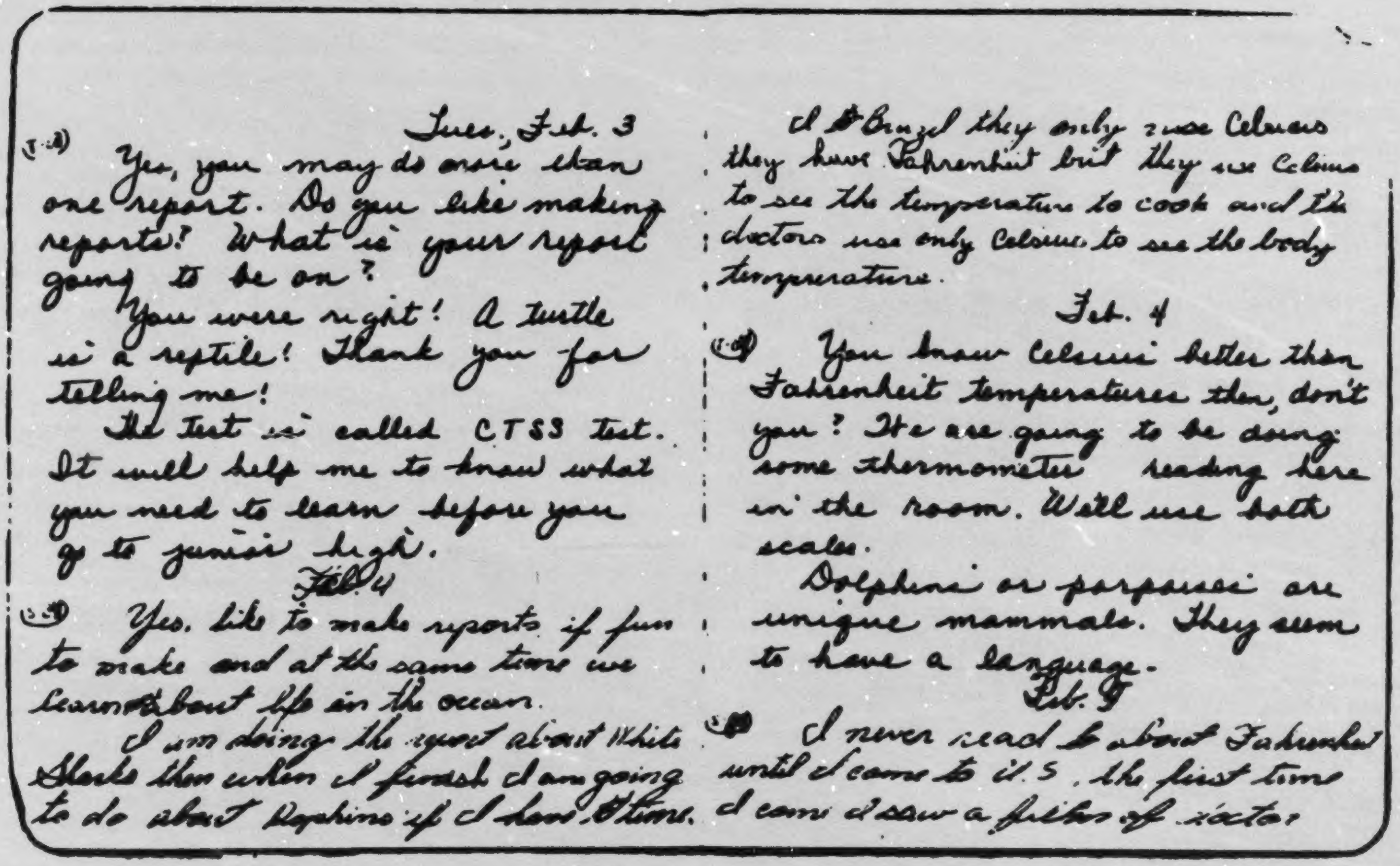

Tues., Feb. 3

Yes, you may do more than one report. Do you like making reports? What is your report going to be on?

You were right! A turtle is a reptile! Thank you for telling me!

The test is called CTSS test. It will help me to know what you need to learn before you go to junior high.

Feb. 4

Yes. like to make reports if fun to make and at the same time we learn about life in the ocean.

I am doing the report about White Sharks then when I finish I am going to do about Dolphins if I have time.

I ~~n~~ Brazil they only use Celsius they have Fahrenheit but they use Celsius to see the temperature to cook and the doctors use only Celsius to see the body temperature.

Feb. 4

You know Celsius better than Fahrenheit temperatures then, don't you? We are going to be doing some thermometer reading here in the room. We'll use both scales.

Dolphins or porpoises are unique mammals. They seem to have a language.

Feb. 5

I never read ~~b~~ about Fahrenheit until I came to U.S. the first time I came I saw a [illegible]

58

59

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U Chal--Dialogue journal text

S-82 Feb. 2 I saw some other film of Brazil in German and U.S.

I don't know what is valetiens?

I can't do the report, I don't know how to start the report?

T-82 Feb. 2 Valentines Day is when people buy or make heart shaped cards to give to each other. We will make a Valentine in class.

In language we talked about how to make a report. The first thing you need to do is to decide on what your report will be on. It should be on some form of ocean life. Then you begin finding books and information on the subject.

S-83 Feb. 3 Can we do more than one ocean life?

What test is the test we going to do tomorrow?

T-83 Feb. 3 Yes, you may do more than one report. Do you like making reports? What is your report going to be on?

You were right! A turtle is a reptile! Thank you for telling me!

The test is called CTSS test. It will help me to know what you need to learn before you go to junior high.

S-84 Feb. 4 Yes, like to make reports if fun to make and at the same time we learn more about life in the ocean.

I am doing the report about White Sharks then when I finish I am going to do about Dophins if I have time.

In Brazil they only use Celsius they have Fahrenheit but they use Celsius to see the temperature to cook and the doctors use only Celsius to see the body temperature.

T-84 Feb. 4 You know Celsius better than Fahrenheit temperatures then, don't you? We are going to be doing some thermometer reading here in the room. We'll use both scales.

Dolphins or porpoises are unique mammals. They seem to have a language.

S-85 Feb. 5 I never read about Fahrenheit until I come to U.S., the first time I come I saw a film of doctor and they find that 1 monkey had a fever and when he got the fever his body temperature was 115° F but I thoughth they was talking about 115°C but now I know the different of Celsuis and Fahrenheit.

I know and I read that scientist was stunding about dolphins language. Last year when I was in Brazil I was in the beach and I saw a dophin dead on the sand and when I touch the skin is like sofet and then when

I eat the lunch and I go to see the dolphin some birds was eating the dolphin.

T-85
Feb. 5

The dolphins have even been trained to do undersea work for the Navy. They seem to have an intelligence. The birds help to clean the beach by eating the dead animals. The dolphin's skin has no scales--we expect an animal that looks like a fish to have scales.

Do you like doing reports? Our class seems to be deeply involved.

Have you had a chance to talk to Mrs. P-? ?

S-86
Feb. 6

I liked to do the reports is best than do the report in a paper.

No. I didn't talk with Mrs. Povey, I cant talk with her at the recess or lunch.

T-86
Feb. 6

I'm glad you found your journal!

Mrs. Povey will be back on Tuesday and you can talk to her then.

Our Valentines are pretty--did you like making them?

S-87
Feb. 9

I am glad too to found, I put under the notebook on the math class and a forgote to bring but I thinked that I put in the box.

I liked to make Valentines even that took me a lot of time.

Are we going to come to school only 3 day?

T-87
Feb. 9

We will have 5 days off from school. Thursday is Lincoln's birthday. Friday is just a day off. Saturday and Sunday are regular holidays off. Monday is a holiday in honor of George Washington's Birthday. (He was our first President.)

You thought you put your journal in the box, but Simon thought you left it in Math class.

S-88
Feb. 10

No, Simon said that he saw me puting the journal in the box but Jun An asked me if I take to Math and I said yes and we when to see on the Math class and I found the journal.

T-88
Feb. 10

Now you know what Valentines Day is all about. Did they have Valentines Day in Brazil?

They celebrate Carnival in Brazil. I saw that in the movie I saw about Brazil.

Today we learned 3 ways to read better. Do you use any of those ways?

S-89
Feb. 11

I think in Brazil they have Valentine but I never celebrat Valentine.

In Brazil the Carnival start Feb. on the first Monday and finish three days later. The biggest Carnival is in Rio de Janeiro.

I used the way to read fast, reading 3 words at the time when I start I was confuse reading three at time.

Have a happy Valentines and a good vacation.

T-89 Feb. 11 Where did you live in Brazil? Did you ever see the Carnival parade or were you in the parade?

Yes, I can see why you might be confused reading words in clusters. You are learning the English language and the reading at the same time. You are really doing well. It just takes time to learn so much.

Thank you for the cute valentine. I really like it.

Have a fine holiday--all five days of it!

S-90 Feb. 19 I live in Sao Paulo and they have Carnival in Sao Paulo but I only saw the Carnival live 1 time then I start to see the Carnival at the television.

Can I made long arms and legs for my creatures?

T-90 Feb. 19 Oh, yes! Do make long arms and legs on your creature if you want to! It should be fun to do. We'll work on them again next week.

Yes, watching Carnival on TV would be safer and easier.

S-91 Feb. 23 How many prizes we can win?

Can I finish the Social Studies work on other day?

I am giving to you the paper my father sign because I was sick.

T-91 Feb. 23 Thank you very much for putting the note about being sick in your journal.

Yes! We'll work on our social studies on Tuesday then we'll finish it for homework this week.

I'm sure you can win as many prizes as you can! Soon we'll find out how much you must sell to get prizes.

MICHAEL

Like U Chal, Michael was a highly motivated student. Every day he was one of the first students to arrive at school and one of the last to leave. When he was at school, he was involved in everything: asking questions, wanting to help, and looking for more work. In one interview, Mrs. Reed talked extensively about Michael. Since her words describe his enthusiasm and his struggles much better than any paraphrase could, some of her observations are quoted nearly verbatim here.

Michael's enthusiasm about school

> *Michael stayed after school every day. He adored school. He was such a helpful child, and he would work like a little Trojan. Custodial time had been cut and he would vacuum that room and take that old vacuum and just tear through the place. Sometimes if there wasn't anything else to do, he would start cleaning out a cupboard and he'd take everything out and soon he'd have it all dusted and cleaned and in order.*

His enthusiasm for learning

> *Frequently I would take Michael to the library with me after school. I wish you could have seen him when he first went to the library. He was like a little rabbit. He just hustled from one shelf to another. He could not believe his eyes, all the books that were there to be checked out. We could check out any book we wanted. So I told him he could check out two books on my card. So then, to pick out two books was a terrible job. I'm sure it took us an hour to do that. Then he thought he'd better only pick out one book, because if he lost one, he could pay for it easier. And the next day he'd come to school and he'd read the one book overnight. So then, he could hardly wait to go back. I did make him wait, though. I thought, "If I run him to the library every time he wants to, this could get to be a habit." So I'd tell him, "No, Michael, I'm not going for two weeks so you're going to have to wait now. There are books in our school library."*

His love for math

> *Michael was so outstanding in math that he wanted extra math all the time. And the math teacher got very sharp with him because the math he was demanding was difficult. And she'd say to me, "I have to work half a day to get him a set of problems that he does in twenty minutes." So, he was pushing her. And I had to say to him, "You know she has more than you in her class, and there are times when she just does not have the extra time to make math problems for you that you enjoy." Then we were able to find a seventh grade math*

book that had the answers in the back and I just let him go ahead and work on it when he wanted to. He soon kind of backed out of it, because there were a lot of English words and it was very difficult, but at least it kept him from irritating her.

Although he had had only five months of English study in an ESL class in the United States before entering Mrs. Reed's classroom and he spoke only Burmese at home, in his journal Michael was eager to express himself in English. From the first days of writing, he was both very curious about everything and full of ideas and suggestions for how things should be done. At first, however, his ideas were too complicated to express in his limited English, and Mrs. Reed often had to ask for clarification to find out what he was trying to say:

S-9 *Oh yes! your born in the America? I think is you came from other country. Mrs. Reed, I got it good idear Mrs. Reed, you shop the pencels right? other people is through the two inch pencel so you have to say, "you used the pencil is two week", so they are not through the pencil any more so the have to used the pencil is two week.*

T-9 *I'm not sure your idea is clear. Could you explain it? Everyone had a new long pencil 3 weeks ago. Some people lose them--so I have little short ones for them to use. How could we keep from losing our pencils?*

Sometimes he expressed his own frustration about having so much to say and only limited means for saying it.

S-18 *Mrs. Reed I'm learning the English. Sometime I went tell something I can't tell because I don't know how to call.*

At the same time, Michael became quite involved in the journal interaction. Once he and Mrs. Reed had established rapport, he was eager to know her opinions:

> *Mrs. Reed how is it look the sine I made for the stamp we put the stamp on the map. I hope you like my sine I made for the Stamp Club.*

to learn all he could about practices in the United States:

Michael: *Mrs. Reed what did you mean about the valentines. you said we have to bring the valentines. Did we* *have to made the valentines for our classroom? I dint know what are you talking.*

Mrs. Reed: *No, you don't have to give anyone a valentine. It is just fun to do. Sometimes we like someone but we do not tell them. We feel funny telling someone we really like them. Giving a valentine is an easy way of doing it. If you want to give one valentine or 50 valentines, it doesn't matter. You do what you want about that.*

Michael: *Mrs. Reed I know what is the valentine but I don't know what I have to do and the valentine is we have to give the cards to someone and I have to buy the cards but I can't buy the cards that is the problems.*

Mrs. Reed: *No problem! Anyone who wants to give Valentines can. If you don't want to give Valentines you don't have to.*

and to teach Mrs. Reed about the customs of his native Burma. Once he had explained his family's New Year's celebration, and Mrs. Reed had responded by writing "Gung Hay Fat Choy!," the Chinese expression for "Happy New Year!" and then went on to discuss the activities he had mentioned. Michael responded:

> *Mrs. Reed you say with the Chines Happy New Years did you, but you got wrong saying the Chines new year and we have many kind of the language. Jenny spook other language and I speak another language so you write on my book.*

Probably because of his eagerness to learn and to express himself clearly, Michael quickly develops the ability to provide elaborate details in his writing. In S-92 below he explains in detail the problems he is having with his peanut sales (an activity that all of the sixth grade classes were involved in), a discussion that began in S-91:

S-91 *I think I am going to get more peanut or mix but I don't know where I have to sales the peanut and mix.*

T-91 *You and your brother could go to people who live near your house and tell them about our school and ask them to buy trail mix or peanuts to help our school.*

S-92 *My brother doesn't want to go with me and he said "he don't want sales the peanut." You know I got only 2 mix. I told them to buy it from me and they said "I can't buy it from*

> *you becuse I am buying for Jenny and nobody is going to buy it from me and look at some people they don't got nothing and buy from other peoples. You know Benny said he is going to get the AA and now he did not sales nothing and how can't he is going to get the A.A. You know I don't know how is the Sven got lot of the sales. Mrs. Reed you said you going buy the mix from 10 peoples but I got better idea the idea is write 28 peoples name and put in the box and you take one and you give money and it is fear to do that right Mrs. Reed? and did you like my idea.*

Another sign of Michael's progress is his and Mrs. Reed's use of idiomatic expressions. Once she wrote, "You have learned a great deal," and Michael responded: ". . . what do you mean I got a good deal?" Mrs. Reed had no doubt realized that Michael's English skills had advanced enough that she could use such idiomatic expressions, knowing that Michael would either understand the meaning or he would ask for clarification.

By the middle of the year, Michael was secure enough with his English that he even made jokes with Mrs. Reed.

> S-114 *. . . Jenny is going to get the 7th Journal and she write too much like she eat too much. Oh! I am just joking you Mrs. Reed for give me Mrs. Reed please.*

Another striking improvement in Michael's writing during the year is in his verb usage. At the beginning of the year, for example, he frequently overused the word is. For example, in S-16 he wrote, "My sister said that ok, becuse she is go to library is everyday." By the end of the year, his verbs improved markedly, and he wrote phrases such as S-132: ". . . and now you mind is coming back to you?"

The two journal samples below show dramatically the change in both Michael's and Mrs. Reed's dialogue journal writing over six months' time. They have moved from brief and simply-stated references to school activities to reasoning through a problem and discussion of Friday the 13th.

September (second day of journal writing)

Student: *What are we learning.*
Tody what P.E is.
I like play Baceball.
Next week P.E is what.

Teacher: *We are learning of the longitude and latitude of our world. We are learning about volcanoes. Today we looked at some lava. Did you see the rock float?*

Today we were going to play relay races for P.E. I don't know what next week's P.E. area will be.

March 13 (six months later)

Student: *I know I was saying the bad language I will stop saying the bad language I know why I get in trouble and I don't go out play I don't get in trouble so I won't go out nomore and play. Today is friday 13 and it is bad luck day becuse we got report card, math test and spelling test. How come people said friday 13 is the bad luck day why?*

Teacher: *It is just an idea that people have! 13 is supposed to be a bad luck number and when it comes on Friday it is even more bad luck. Some people think Friday the thirteenth is good luck.*

It is good for you to be out playing. It is very good for you to learn to control your temper and your tongue.

Some of Michael's interview comments show how important the dialogue journal is to him as an aid to learning:

Staton: *What do you do if Mrs. Reed doesn't have time to explain things to you in class?*

Michael: *I ask her in the journal. Sometimes she explains something to us and I don't understand, so I write in the journal and she tells me what it means. I came here and I didn't know about Science and Social Studies, and I wrote it in the journal and she explained it to me.*

Staton: *Have you ever written the same thing for a few days in a row?*

Michael: *No. Never. I have to write something else. If I write the same sentence, what's she going to answer back?*

Staton: *What have you learned from the journal?*

Michael: *The journals help you learn how to write and how to read. If you do your homework, you just write it down and you don't do nothing, and you don't remember it. In the journal, you write, and then later you read what she wrote.*

Apart from the opportunity for Michael to grow in his ability to express himself in English, the most important function of the dialogue journal for Michael and Mrs. Reed may be the means it provides for discussions of his problem with fighting. In an interview, Mrs. Reed described the problem:

> *Michael often got in fights on the playground. He could not resist. If anyone called him a name, his temper flared and he was a very tiny, wiry little fellow. We talked many times, both orally and in the journal about it. I'd tell him, "Now Michael, it's your choice. If you're going to allow someone to make you angry, then they will, because they get you to fight. He liked to watch fighting films on television, and on Saturdays he and his brothers went to movies and it was always these fighting films they went to see. So it was a pattern he had to learn how to handle.*

Without the journal, there probably would not have been such an open channel for discussing the reasons for his fighting or for finding ways to deal with it. Very early in the year, Mrs. Reed discusses Michael's behavior with him:

T-14 *. . . You must not fight! If someone calls you a name don't listen, walk away. Don't fight. If you fight you will have bad marks on your school record. You will be sent home from school! If they call you names laugh at them!*

S-15 *. . . Mrs. Reed, I don't want to fight Mrs. Reed. They call me China boy so I don't like it . . .*

T-15 *When they call you "China Boy" laugh at them . . . you know and I know you are not bad. They are not smart to call you bad names. . . .*

Not only can she warn him about the consequences of his behavior, but Michael can discuss the situation or problem that led to the fight. This way, she can help him to learn how to deal with difficult situations without fighting. This exchange shows the reasoning about fighting that may have occurred only because of the journal:

Mrs. Reed: *Your black eye hurt. I could tell because you kept touching it. Do you think being hit by Willie was fun? Could you laugh when he calls you a name instead of fighting? What will you do in Junior High if the big boys find out you get so angry you fight when someone calls you a name? Do you think they will stop calling you names or call you names all of the time so they can see you get so angry you fight?*

Michael: *My black eyes is no so hurt just little. It is not fun to fight with Willie. They call me name I don't care. I know Mrs. Reed if I go to the Junior High School the big boy is going to call me every name but the important things I have to remember is don't fight them back or don't tell them nothing and just go home or something.*

Mrs. Reed: *Good! Remember it is so easy to say that you won't fight when they call you names, but when they call you names how will you feel? Will you get so angry that you will forget about your plan?*

Michael: *I try to don't fight them back Mrs. Reed. I know they call me name I feel like angry or mad.*

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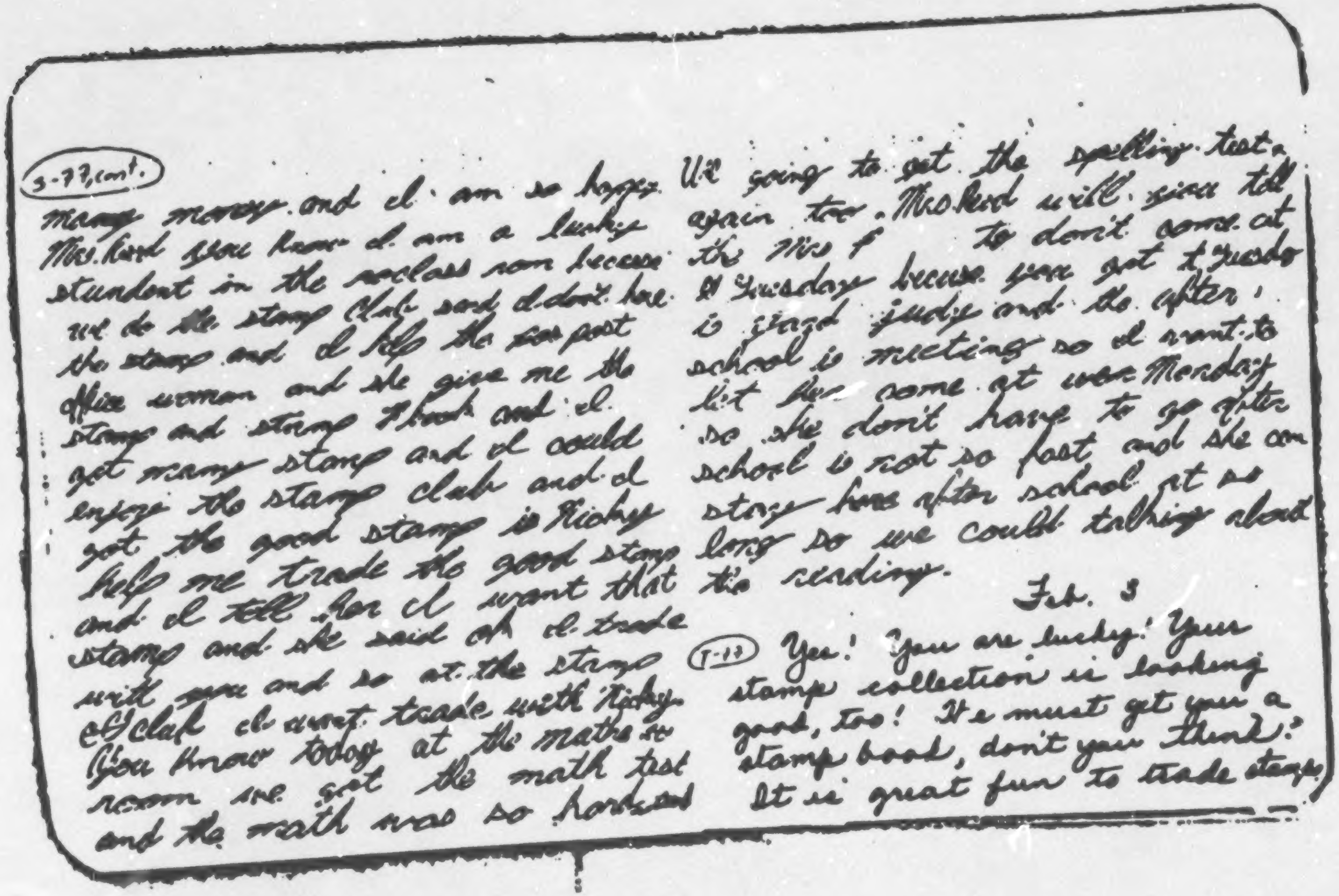

(3-77, cont.)
many money and I am so happy
Mrs. Reed you know I am a lucky
student in the class rom because
we do the stamp club and I don't have
the stamp and I help the [illegible] post
office woman and she give me the
stamp and stamp book and I
got many stamp and I could
enjoy the stamp club and I
got the good stamp is Ricky
help me trade the good stamp
and I tell her I want that
stamp and she said oh I trade
with you and so at the stamp
club I went trade with Ricky.
You know today at the maths [illegible]
room we got the math test
and the math was so hard and
We going to get the spelling test
again too. Mrs Reed will give the
the Mrs [illegible] to don't come at
at Tuesday because you got t Tuesday
is stayed judy and the after
school is meeting so I want to
let her come at wen Monday
so she don't have to go after
school is not so fast and she can
stay here after school at so
long so we could talking about
the reading.

Feb. 3

(T-13) Yes! You are lucky! Your
stamp collection is looking
good, too! We must get you a
stamp book, don't you think?
It is great fun to trade stamps.

Michael--Dialogue journal facsimile

S-77 Feb. 3 You know Mrs. Reed at the U.S.A. is the new years is finish and but at the Burma the new years is at the Fe[illegible] the new years is almost going to come and in this [illegible] I am going to get lot the many money and I am s[illegible] Mrs. Reed you know I am a lucky stundent in the class rom becuse we do the stamp club sand I don't have the stamp and I help the post office woman and she give me the stamp and stamp book and I got many stamp and I could enjoy the stamp club and I got the good stamp is Nicky help me trade the good stamp and I tell her I want that stamp and she said ok I trade with you and so at the stamp club I want to trade with Nicky. You know today at the math test and the math was so hard. We going to get the spelling test again too. Mrs. Reed will you tell the Mrs P- to don't come at Tuesday becuse you got Tuesday is yard judy and after school is meeting so I want to let her come at Monday so she don't have to go after school is not so fast and she can stay after school at so long so we could talking about the reading.

T-77 Feb. 3 Yes! You are lucky! Your stamp collection is looking good, too! We must get you a stamp book, don't you think? It is great to trade stamps.

Yes, I will tell Mrs. P-, you do have good ideas. May I show her what you wrote? I am sure she will be interested. We all like to talk about all of the books we are reading!

Did you get your information about your report done?

S-78 Feb. 4 I did not get my information about my report done Mrs. Reed becuse I tell Jong An to help me on the report and he said no so I did not do my report and another reason is I don't understand to you write on the bord and I can't find the book and I don't know how to do it. ~~You did~~ Did you speak to the Mrs. G- about I did not tell her about I go to the Math class. Oh! I am glad I did turn in my homework. Mrs. Reed can I put the more stamp on the map. I have to tell you something look if we have homework for to read at home right but if I read the book I did't look the clock and just write the 30 minutes so I don't want to write the 30 min. or something and can I write the how many page I read the book or how many page I read the store. Mrs. Reed today test is like the little easy little hard. At today night my grandmother is going to give the money to us and my Uncle and my Aunt is going to give the money at tommorow night we are going to have the little party at tommorow night. At the night ~~we~~ my mother cook something and my Uncle is get the from Restaurn is something and we eat the chicken or something.

T-78 Feb. 4 Gung Hay Fat Choy! I hope that is Chinese for Happy New Year. I hope you get lots of money and have delicious food to celebrate the new year. I hope it will be a great year for you. It is the year of the rooster isn't it?

Yes, if you would like to write the number of pages you are reading each day at home that would be a good record.

If you tell Jung An to help you he may not feel like it. How do you request (ask) for something so you will have a better chance to get what you want?

Did you ask me for help?

S-79 Feb. 5 Mrs. Reed you say with the Chines Happy New Years did you, but you got wrong saying the Chines new year and we have ~~twe-ki~~ many kind of the language. Jenny speak other language and I speak another language so you write on my book.

T-79 Feb. 5 I only knew the Happy New Year for the Chinese language. You taught me how to wish someone happy change of year in Burmese. "Ni thid Coo" or something like that. I like learning about all people, do you?

You did have fun playing at noon didn't you?

T-80 Feb. 6 You know yesterday after school I give the Lisa many stamp and Jenny said "what did give her for" and I said beause she does't have the stamps so I have more so I want to give her the stamp and you got more stamp so I don't have to give you the stamp." Mrs. Reed if they mark on the wall how much they have to pay the school. You know yesturday I got to go the hospital and the nurse said I have to drink the 4 box pail and I got the scond box and at may 6 I have to go again.

T-80 Feb. 6 I'm glad you went to the hospital.. It is important that you take the boxes of pills so you will stay well. When you have taken all 4 boxes, then you may be all well and not have to take more pills.

I'm glad you made the Valentine. I like it.

S-81 Feb. 9 Mrs. Reed you know on this week like the silly week. I don't know what happen on this week. Mrs. Reed what did you mean about the valentines you said we have to bring the valentines. Did we have to made the valentines for ~~people~~ our classroom. I din't know what are you talking.

T-81 Feb. 9	No, you don't have to give anyone a Valentine. It is just a fun thing to do. Sometimes we like someone but we do not tell them. We feel funny telling someone you really like them. Giving a Valentine is an easy way of doing it. If you want to give a valentine or 50 valentines -- it doesn't matter. You do what you want about that.
S-82 Feb. 10	Mrs. Reed I know what is the valentime but I don't know what I have to do and the valentine is we have to give the cards to someone and I have to buy the cards but I can't buy the cards that is the problems. I think I'm not going to the sofeball becuse I did not do nothing about it and Ricardo said I could be the catcher and he break his primise.
T-82 Feb. 10	No problem! Anyone who wants to give Valentines can. If you don't want to give Valentines you don't have to. Talk to Ricardo again! I'm sure he forgot his promise when others on the team began yelling at him. Did you ever find your pen?
S-83 Feb. 11	I didn't not fin my pen. Happy valentine! Mrs. Reed. I want to give the cards to people but I can't give the cards to people. I give the one card to the simon. I think level 10 hard me Mrs. Reed did you think level 10 is hard for me? I saw the Thankgiving Pilgrim in the book. You know today moring U chul put cards into ~~evey~~ every bag except Tony I know why U chul put the cards every cards ~~se~~ becuse he put cards into ~~evey~~ every bag so they don't margar him. Mrs. Reed you said we are going to doo the art with shoebox and you said you don't have the shoebox you can't do art.
T-83 Feb. 11	I am not sure what you said. U Chul put cards in everyone's sack so they don't margar him? What word did you put there? Please tell me. Yes! We will do the shoebox art. Everyone who has a shoe box will do it. Have a Happy vacation! I will see you in 5 days.
S-84 Feb. 17	Oh I forgot what you tell about the valentine you said if you want to give the cards is ok and you don't want to give the cards is ok. too and I saw margar so I was wrong and I did not think about what you tell me a and I'm sarry about telling, the U Chul they margar him so I'm very sarry about that. At the sunday I go to the Beach and I hit with the rock and now my foot is very hard. Yesturday I go magic mountain and my big brother play the game and we got the dolls.

T-84 Feb. 17 I'm glad you went to the beach but I am so sorry about your foot. It looks like it is very sore!

Did you ride the big rides at Magic Mountain. They look like they are very scary.

I will remember to bring in the album for your stamps! Then you will be a Junior Philatelist!

S-85 Feb. 18 I did'nt ride the ride the big ride becuse the big ride is go so fast so I'm scare and I didn't ride the big ride but we wins something else is my big brother play the game and he wins 4 of the dolls one is walrus a dog, and two giraffe and my Ucale play the game he wins one dinosore so we got all of them is 5 of them. Today language is very easy but I don't know next step is hard or easy. You know Simon is catching up to my Jurnal. You know what I like spelling Bee. You know today spelling Bee is little bit easy.

T-85 Feb. 18 You did very well in our practice spelling bee. Yes! I could tell you were having fun.

Which part of the wall do you think will be the best to paint?

Did your Mother like your stamp album?

S-86 Feb. 23 I know Mrs. Reed I know how spelling on the unint 15 and 16 and you call the hard book so I can't spell and got out. Mrs. Reed we are talking about the paint wall. You know I think we will used the Oakwood Ave.wall becuse we used the Oakwood so the people could see our paint piture and if we paint on the Alexandria Ave. so the people is does't drive in there so no body can't see our paint picture. Of course my mother and Aut and my Grandma and my brother, ~~is~~ they are really like ~~my~~ your Stamp Album. You know yesturday we take the reading test was so hard I know whay I got many wrong becuse I didn't know what is that word mean so I got many wrong on my test.

T-86 Feb. 23 That is why we have tests. You can understand what you need to study. You are learning very fast and very well! It is a fact that there is a lot to learn. I am still learning so you need to keep on learning, too.

You spelled very well today! It is good practice for you.

Thank you for cleaning the cupboard and putting the books and papers all straight and neat.

ANDY

Andy was a bright, self-motivated, creative student, who was very literate in Korean. Probably the most memorable aspect of Andy's performance both in class and in the journal is his prolific creativity. In class his artwork was outstanding and he wrote many poems and songs. Halfway through the school year he made a tape for Mrs. Reed of poems and songs that he had written. He quickly learned the various folk dances that the class worked on and was the featured dancer in the Mexican Hat Dance in the school's year-end program. He could rarely be stumped in math, and Mrs. Reed says he could often out-think her on new math problems.

Andy functioned best in class on non-teacher-directed tasks. When students were assigned to work individually or in groups on a Social Studies project, he quickly chose his topic and began gathering information and writing it down. He became animated, and sought out the classroom aid to discuss his ideas and his project plans. However, during editing lessons (rewriting a letter they had drafted previously) he became bored and listless, looking around the room, fiddling with his pen, and often not even completing the assignment. During free times Andy was also busy learning. He arrived a half hour early every day and stayed late after school. He spent much of his free time during the day working with the classroom aid, who was teaching him to speak and write Vietnamese, in exchange for which he was teaching her Korean.

Asked what her goals were for Andy, Mrs. Reed said that she primarily wanted to give him support and encouragement. She simply needed to provide a wide variety of opportunities for learning and he would plunge in wholeheartedly and learn on his own. At the same time, Andy had many problems expressing himself clearly in English, and Mrs. Reed wanted to help him refine his English, both spoken and written.

Like U Chal and Michael, Andy began the year writing hesitantly in his journal. He knew even less English than U Chal (one of the other Korean speakers) did when he came into the class, and U Chal's knowledge of Portuguese helped him a great deal with his progress in English. For Andy, progress was much slower. In an interview, he said that at the beginning of the year he "wrote" in his journal by telling the aide what he wanted to say and then she wrote it down. He "wrote" only a few short lines each day in this manner. One day the aide did not come to school, so he used his dictionary and wrote on his own, which he continued to do every day after that. For a while he continued to write very little, careful not to make mistakes. The following two entries, from October, are characteristic of Andy's early writing:

S-6 *today P.E. time was fun and its fun.*

S-8 *today is I don't know I can speak english. teacher I am sorry.*

Very soon, however, he was so eager to really say something, that with the aid of his dictionary, he plunged in, unconcerned about form, as we can see in these two entries:

S-24 Today in the morning i stairs is fall
Tuesday is man pilgrim make and
today is woman pilgrim make be interest
and pilgrim (my) is school corridor exhibit
me is delighted and me is happy
som pob is every day be ill tempered
Khansomme and me is love no
som pob is be ill tempered nevertheless
som pob is my friend and
Khansomme is too friend
nevertheless no girl friend
and Today is my watch is be out of
order. ow ow ow no

Translation:
[This morning I fell on the stairs. Tuesday we made a male pilgrim, and today we're making a female pilgrim. That is interesting. My pilgrim is in the exhibit in the hallway. I'm delighted and happy.

Everyday sompob is in a bad mood. Khansome and I don't love each other. Sompob is in a bad mood, but he's my friend anyway. Khansomme is my friend too, but not my girlfriend. Today my watch is not working. Oh no.]

S-33 *today my key lose steve because of and I am room 10 is too the my pencil and eraser too steve is bad boy and steve is hit me.*

every day you answer is too more please I am very much want, OK?

Translation:
[Today I lost my key because of Steve. I lost my pencil and eraser too in Room 10. Steve is a bad boy. He hit me.

Please write more to me every day.]

If he didn't know a word, he used a related word that he did know:

S-81 *Today Steve gone* [stole/took] *my eraser.*

S-82 *Today in the morning I am stupid, because I am gone home key.* [I left my key at home.]

In his enthusiasm to express himself, Andy paid very little attention to form, and there was a visible decline in the winter sample in his grammatical correctness. In S-8 (on p. 55) he wrote, "I don't know," etc., but in S-24 above he writes "me is delighted." Whereas S-6 and S-8 have a period at the end of each short sentence, there is no punctuation in S-24 and S-33. Mrs. Reed believed that the correct forms would eventually emerge with his continued writing, and by the end of the year Andy's writing did indeed change in several ways. He demonstrated that he was reading what Mrs. Reed wrote by answering her questions and responding to topics that she wrote about. He also made many attempts to assure that she understood what he was writing, as the following two examples show:

S-157 *I like it* [his Spring festival picture] *because very, very and very happy. (Oh! sorry Mrs. Reed. This sentence wrong. I want tell you "fun" but I forgot so I want change "happy" to "fun.")*

S-160 Today I am very happy because Miss Vu said "do you want to go Disneyland?" (I don't know that spelling. I think you know that. That is children ground. You got it? I think you know now). so I said "Yes!" and mom said too "Yes!" So I am very, very and very happy so, so much.

As he experimented with words that he found in his dictionary, he began using these words in the right context (in S-24, "delighted," "ill tempered," "nevertheless," "school corridor exhibit"). In S-24 he corrects himself, moving "my" in front of "pilgrim," and he demonstrates sound reasoning in his writing about his friendship with Khansomne. At the same time his forms show some improvement. I mentioned earlier that he had dropped I as subject for me. In S-157 and S-160 he has gone back to I again.

As Andy learns to manipulate the English language, he fills his journal with creatively stated messages:

S-30 *I am dumb + dumb + dumb + dumb + " + "*
All friend be disapoointed. (last letter is "I am dumb.")

S-69 *I am happy* ^{1} + *happy* ^{2} x *happy* ^{3} = *happy*^{9}

S-108
① ② ③ ④
Today I am glad, happy, joy and fun
very, very, very much, because today my mom
buy the my shirt and my pants so (all good word)→
① ② ③ ④
" " " " .

We have already seen his "owww no" to express dismay in S-24. He also uses other means to express attitudes, inventing written forms for oral expressions:

S-26 *today is hot and P.E. is Four Square me is play*
Four Square amusement "kiki"

S-82 *Today in the morning Sompob finish Journal. Bad boy*
Sompob (I jestingly).

He explained to Mrs. Reed in class that "ki ki," means that he is smiling or laughing.

He also develops written forms to express anger, as in S-124 and S-118 below:

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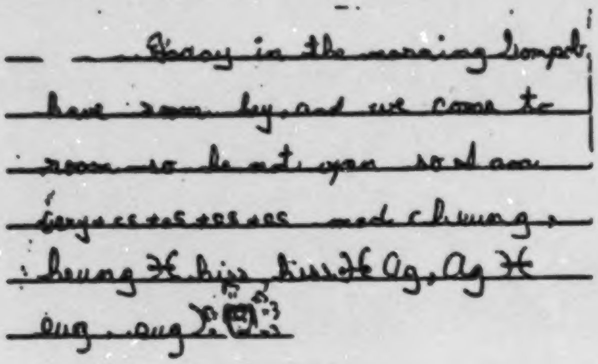
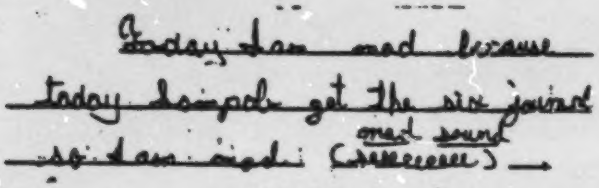
S-124



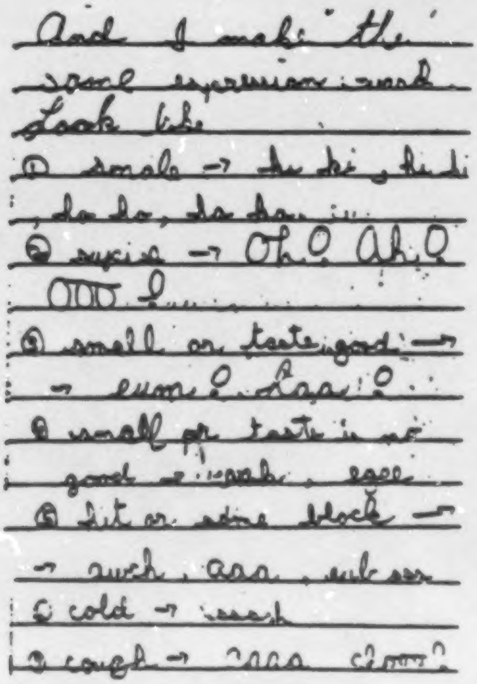
Today in the morning Sompob
have soon by, and we come to
room so he eat, you so I am
[illegible] mad chung,
heung H hiss hiss H Ag, Ag H
eng, eng

S-118



Today I am mad because
today Sompob get the six journal
mad sound
so I am mad (rrrrrrrr) →

In one entry, he explains the meaning of his expressions for: (1) smiles; (2) surprise; (3) something that smells or tastes good; (4) something that smells or tastes bad; (5) the sound someone makes when hit; (6) the sound of cold; (7) the sound of a cough.



And I make the
same expression: such
Look like
① smile → hi hi, hi hi
, ha ha, ha ha ...
② surprise → Oh! Ah!
Ooo! ...
③ smell or taste good →
→ eum! Aaa!
④ smell or taste is not
good → ugh, eee
⑤ hit or some block →
→ ouch, aaa, uh oo
⑥ cold → ssssh
⑦ cough → aaa chooo?

If Andy's journal writing were to be faulted in any way, it would be for the degree of self-determination that it displays. There are long stretches in which there is little evidence of any interaction with Mrs. Reed. For most of the year, there is no evidence that he has even read her entry. He responds to none of her topics or questions and writes pages and pages, seemingly oblivious to her as audience. When asked if this lack of interaction bothered her, Mrs. Reed explained that since the dialogue journal involves both writing and reading skills as well as collaborative thinking, it was not optimal that Andy didn't respond to her writing in any way, because that meant that he may not be reading what she wrote and therefore was not receiving the benefits of the interaction that were possible. But he was so creative and self-motivated that she didn't want to block him. "To stifle a child like that who's so creative by saying something like, 'You didn't answer my question,' when he's got so many things in his mind to do on his own is wrong. He's generating his own ideas."

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(S-67, cont.)
(mother say) will come to home. All right I am happy happy happy. Today Sompob came to school in the morning 7:10 o'clock. Today too I am second. next David. next Alex. next Kenny. Today after saturday Mrs Reed bring to bird's bone and bird. Today Mrs Silk bring to 4 tropical fish. I like fish and I want too. "No" my sister said. "Yang. Yang." I don't want journal. "No No" I am sorry Mrs Reed. Yes! I am bad. Here is not Korea. I am sorry. Korea is Sompob play is very bad and here is U.S.A. not Korea. I am sorry.

(T-67) I am sorry too! I feel sad when you are sad. Sampob is your friend. He was playing with you. He did not mean to make you sad. I am glad it is over.

Did you see the chicken, duck and mammal vertebrae? They are part of the backbone. The backbone holds the animal's body up.

Yes! You are happy and your Mother will be happy to see you! It will be a happy day.

You will be happy if you can go to Korea to see your Daddy at vacation time. I hope you can go.

(S-68) February. 2. 82
Today in the morning I am shower. Finish shower I am cold. I said "Sister, let me have undershirt" please." sister

S-67
Feb. 1
Hi Mrs Reed. Today I am happy. Because my mom will come to home. Only 6 day (satdrday) will come to home. All right I am happy happy happy. Today Sompob came to school in the morning 7:10 o'clock. Today too I am second. next David. next Alex. next Kemmy. Today after satdrday Mrs Reed bring to bird's bone and bird. Today Mrs S- bring to 4 tropical fish. I like fish and I want too. "No" my sister said. "Yang,Yang.". I don't want journal. "No No" I am sorry Mrs Reed. Yes! I am bad. Here is not Korea. I am sorry. Korea is Sompob play is very bed and here is U.S.A. not Korea. I am sorry.

T-67
Feb. 1
I am sorry too! I feel sad when you are sad. Sompob is your friend. He was playing with you. He did not mean to make you sad. I am glad it is over.

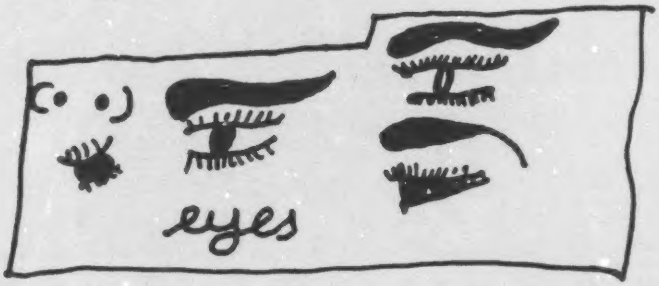
Did you see the chicken, duck and mammal vertebrae? They are part of the backbone. The backbone holds the animal's body up.

Yes! You are happy and your Mother will be happy to see you! It will be a happy day.

You will be happy if you can go to Korea to see your Daddy at vacation time. I hope you can go.

S-68
Feb. 2
Today in the morning I am shower. Finish shower I am cold. I said "Sister, let me have undershirt please." sister said "No" and I am go to bed room. Lost is my sister give to undershirt and sister said "dume".. Today is morning sister and I am fire. I know, I am bed boy. I go to shower room in first is ready (undershirt, tower). Still my sister said "so, I don't care." "I am too spirit." stick to one's own opinion. Today I am second came to school. Sompob is today too first. O.K. I am too faster (maybe). This week play "Tetherball". I like play this P.E. time is I am happy. Yesterday P.E. (dancing) is I like (very like). Mrs Reed, maybe today too play dancing please. Today go to Library. Library have good book (orea book have too). Today Miss V- is cute and you too. The cute closed and smile face. I like you and Miss V- face. Today is girl and boy came to school. I am start first. sorry Mrs Reed I did it (ki ki). I am too faster. I am too other give me journal. I am only 1 peage. I am happy. All right I like other Journal. I am happy happy very happy. Today my aunt come to home. My aunt is marriage (U.S.A. people Korean). I am happy. Today I am funny. Today play P.E. time is William said "Fattey Andy." I don't know William. You teach William. I like play picture. I like eye picture. o.k. I picture.

S-68
(ctd.)



See! I like picture. "I am ugly eyes, yes?" (ki ki) See you Tomorrow. Mrs Reed. please other Journal teacher.

T-68
Feb. 2

Yes! You are ready for a new journal. It is good to have a new one.

You are not dumb! You are very smart and you work hard. I like your eyes! They are happy eyes when you are happy. They are sad eyes when you are sad! You are a handsome boy!

We will have dancing on Monday. I'm glad you enjoy dancing. I do, too.

Today you made a food chain. We can see the food the bird eats. You can see what eats the bird. Your food chain is beautiful.

S-69
Feb. 3

Today I am happy, because give me "New Journal". I like "New Journal". I in picture name is "Korea bird and Korea dragon and sun". I am happy. My mom come her 3 day. I am happy. My mom give to me present. "Make toy". "Stamps" "Korea book (cartoon.) and other is give to me. I am happy happy. "Faster come here mom please. Today I am second came to school. "Oh, No". O.K. Tomorrow I am first. "No more". only I am happy + happy^2 x happy^3= happy^9. See you tomorrow. Mrs Reed. bye

T-69
Feb. 3

Your Mother will be happy to see you! You can tell your Mother you are learning to speak and to write more English everyday.

You were at school before I was today. Thursday we will go back outside before school because Mrs. Reed has to go out to watch all of the students.

We learned about the cold Arctic Biome. Would you like to live there?

S-70
Feb. 4

Today too I am happy. 2 day is my mom come to (here) house. I am thank for God. I am again happy happy. Yester day homewerk is hurt, but I like animals and examine. Today go to other library. I like library.

S-70 (ctd.)

Library have Korea books and good other books have. I am one more happy. Today I am one more second, I don't care, becuose same study! Today in the morning is raining. The small raining. I like big raining. Now my country is snow. I like snow too. I want see snow. "Yang, Yang". Today you are outside me too outside play game. I am play in the morning game is funny game. I like game. Today other teacher teach my cross room. I like she. She like animals and I am too same. I am happy. She bring to mouse. I don't like mouse but, she bring mouse is cute (sorry, mot mouse the rat). Today I teach Gihan. Gihan is that's good, becuose stirt (first) is faster. good girl. Mrs S- said "good". I am happy. You said too. I am one more happy happy.

T-70
Feb. 4

Thank you for being so good to Gihan. She is learning and you are helping. She feels happy. You are a kind friend.

Yes! I like the library. We have many fine books. I have some animal books. Did you get some animal book?

Your homework was very hard. You worked very hard. Fine work Andy!

You are happy. Then you are very happy. Then you are very,very happy!

S-71
Feb. 5

Yesterday I am go to library. You are pickup to me, "Thank". I have library card, I bring to 8 book. I like the book, becuose library books is good book. I to library. Yesterday Joyce and William is came to Library. Tomorrow my mom come to house. I am happy, happy, happy. Tomorrow I go to air plane stop. Tomorrow I give to present from to my mom. Yester day go to library whach box make, and math time make design in pictuore. I want paper. please". I am only for happy. Next monday Miss V- give to me stamps, I am happy. I am too give to stamps. I am happy + happy= = happy^2.

T-71
Feb. 5

You are very, very happy. I am happy because you are happy. Your Mother will be the happiest Mother in the United States when she can see her Andy.

In math time we made triangles. We cut them out with scissors. Then we learned how to find the area. It was fun.

S-72
Feb. 10

Today too I am happy, because you back to school. Today is good day and happy day. I am be concerned, because you are sick. Yesterday teacher is I don't like! like!. She said "Try". I know, I am try and "I don't know" I said "I don't know teacher" teacher said "All try, hurry". I don't like She. My mom came to house. I am happy.

S-72
(ctd.)

My mom give to stamps. I am happy, because other present too, and mom give to stamps is $500. Yester day my aunt give to me pen. I am one more happy. pen have color is 4 color (green, red, blue, brack.). I like this pen. All day I am happy. Valentines make cute doll. I make 2 people, people is mother other people is son. Mrs S- said "Good!, I like." I am happy, happy, happy, happy. Today Miss V- give to stamps, I like stamps. Miss V- give to stamps is she country stamps. She country stamps is no more, so I like. Today Kemmy copy me. bad boy. Kemmy is first. Sompob is know. Kemmy copy me (all). I don't know Kemmy. I don't like Kemmy. Kemmy afflict Gihan. bed boy Kemmy "She is start Englesh stopped." bad boy Kemmy.

T-72
Feb. 10

I am happy to be back at school. I am glad to feel better. I miss you!

Mrs. H- tries to be a good teacher. It is very hard to be substitute teacher.

I am happy that your Mother is here, again. Is she happy to be back again?

We will have Valentines Party. We will play games and have food to eat. You will like that,.

Today we read, "I live at -------- . My home is at ------ ." You live on an avenue. An avenue is another name for street.

S-73
Feb. 11

Today I am first came to school. I am happ, because I want first came to school. I am happ. Today you make mall box is very good. My box is 2 hate. no more I am sorry. happy Valentine

T-73
Feb. 11

Yes, you had a mail box for your Valentines. Thank you for helping to put all of the mail boxes up!

Did you have 2 hearts on your mail box? How many hearts did you have in your journal?

You were too busy to write very much today!

U Chal, Michael, and Andy are bright students who would probably do well in any educational circumstance, with or without a dialogue journal. But their communication with Mrs. Reed in the journal has allowed them to break out of some of the constraints of teacher-directed classroom work and to explore the limits of their proficiency, at the same time that Mrs. Reed's entries serve as a writing model and a guide, which even Andy eventually becomes attuned to.

> Somehow daily writing on any topic with an overall thrust that is positive keeps even the least academically oriented student aimed in the general direction of a "can do" attitude. . . . Journals help us to support, maintain, and inspire a more positive frame of mind with students who have a tendency to give up or to decide that "it's no use."
>
> Letter from Leslee Reed
> 5-18-84

The next three students, Laura, Su Kyong, and Kemmy, have a much lower level of English proficiency than U Chal, Michael, and Andy. As will become clear in the discussion in this section, the dialogue journal interaction is an important channel for encouraging them to express themselves at all.

LAURA

Laura had a very difficult time adjusting to school in the United States. She had arrived in the U.S. from Italy only five months before she entered Mrs. Reed's class. She had attended much smaller, parochial schools in Italy and felt insecure in the large, heterogeneous public school. She lived in a mixed neighborhood and, as far as we know, was the only Italian student in the school. She had no Italian-speaking friends.

Laura was also tall for her age and more mature than the other girls in the class, so that she felt self-conscious about her clothes, her hair, and her weight, as shown in this journal entry:

S-69 *I am get in a diet because am fatt. Leticia is waching everything I eat and I hop I can be skinny because is good.*

She tended to be stubborn and had a lot of problems with her friends.

S-78 *Leanor wanth to fite with me only because in Math I told her to not copy me. She said today I told her if she want to fite with me she has to come to*

> *my house and then I will fite....I donth carr if she is going to win me she ruealy wanth to fite only for a little think. She caldh me so many bad worsh to me. And I never said somethinks.*

She felt insecure about her English and her school work in general. One of the major preoccupations in her journal was whether she would pass to the seventh grade:

S-42 *Mrs. Reed I thing I am not going to pass grade cause I don't know inglish and I an dome and scare scare scare!!!*

This preoccupation lasted far into the year:

May

S-103 *I donth know if I am ruedy to be in 7 grade I ruely don't know. do you think I wil pass. I am realy nerves.*

Although Laura had many problems with English, as we can see from the journal entries above, Mrs. Reed considered her to be a strong average student, hard-working and sincere. Her primary goals for Laura were to orient her to English and help her to feel good about herself and her ability to handle English. Mrs. Reed expected that once her self-concept improved, her language in general would develop, and this would lead to the mastery of specific reading and writing skills. Toward that end, Mrs. Reed tape recorded stories that Laura could listen to while following along in a book, to accustom herself to the pronounciation, intonation, and rhythm of English.

The journal also was a perfect place to help Laura with her self-concept. Below is Mrs. Reed's journal response to Laura's concern about her abilities.

S-42 *Mrs. Reed I thing I am not going to pass grade cause I don't know inglish and I an dome and scare scare scare!!!*

T-42 *You are not dumb! You're scared, but you must keep working!*

Through the year, some remarkable changes are evident in Laura's dialogue journal writing. At the first of the year, she was reluctant to write at all. This is all she wrote for her first entry:

S-1 *Sept. 19-1980*

During the next eight school days, she turned in an empty journal three times. One day when Mrs. Reed wrote, "You did not write to me! I am sad!" she responded:

S-10 *Ms. Reed I know yow sad, but only write in English because camprehend litle and everi day I not ave for urite in English?*

Once Mrs. Reed succeeded in getting Laura to write every day, she needed to teach her how to do the writing--to start her entry on the line following the previous entry instead of starting a new page for each entry. After 18 entries in which Mrs. Reed modeled the proper procedure and told Laura directly where to write, she finally mastered the technique of keeping a dialogue journal, although her entries still remained brief and superficial for a long time. Her first 25 entries ranged from one to three sentences, and were never longer than three sentences.

Gradually Laura began to write more and more--about herself, her family, her personal concerns, as well as school activities. Once she began to open up and discuss things that were on her mind, she had less difficulty meeting the three-sentence limit. For example:

S-70 *Today I am so happy because yesterday my father sad he was going to by a new washengmashin then yesterday he came with a new car a beg new car is a Honda and she has the radio. Leticia like to talk about me yesterday she said every thing abowt my diat to the boy I donth like that I am sorry if I donth urite a lot because I die not have the time.*

T-70 *How nice! A new car! What color is it? Did you take a ride in the new car?*

I'm sure Leticia did not think when she told the boys about your diet! She is so thin she does not need to think about a diet so she does not understand how you feel. Tell her!

Laura's use of English forms shows rapid improvement in the journal. Her spelling, which was very weak in the beginning of the year, making some of her early entries rather difficult to interpret, quickly became more standard and thus easier to understand. "Bekes" became "because"; "beg" became "big", and "ave" became "have". At the same time, because she was continually adding new words to her vocabulary, there continued to be many spelling errors. Often, she seemed to be falling back on the spelling rules of Italian, which made some of her entries still difficult to decipher:

S-118 . . . *I know I have to cius for baseball are yow going to cius too . . . after scholl I am going to take the chinder garden chits to a nursery scholl . . .*

In this entry she gets very involved in explaining the after-school job that she will have and introduces words which are new for her: "kindergarten", "kids", "choose". In each case, her misspelling seems to result from an attempt to spell an unknown word using rules of Italian spelling: ci represents the English /ch/ sound; ch represents /k/.

By the end of the year, Laura became so involved in her journal writing that she was no longer reluctant to communicate in English. In addition to her improved spelling and grammar, she developed a more fluent, chatty writing style. It appears that she even adopted some of Mrs. Reed's techniques for drawing students into a conversation, asking tag and opinion questions:

S-103 *I like when you reed the book after lunch is like a relax time wath do you think.*

S-118 *. . . Do yow like babys? I do like them special when they are 3 yers old they are very nice.*

S-120 *I love the songs that we are going to sing an gratuation donth you?*

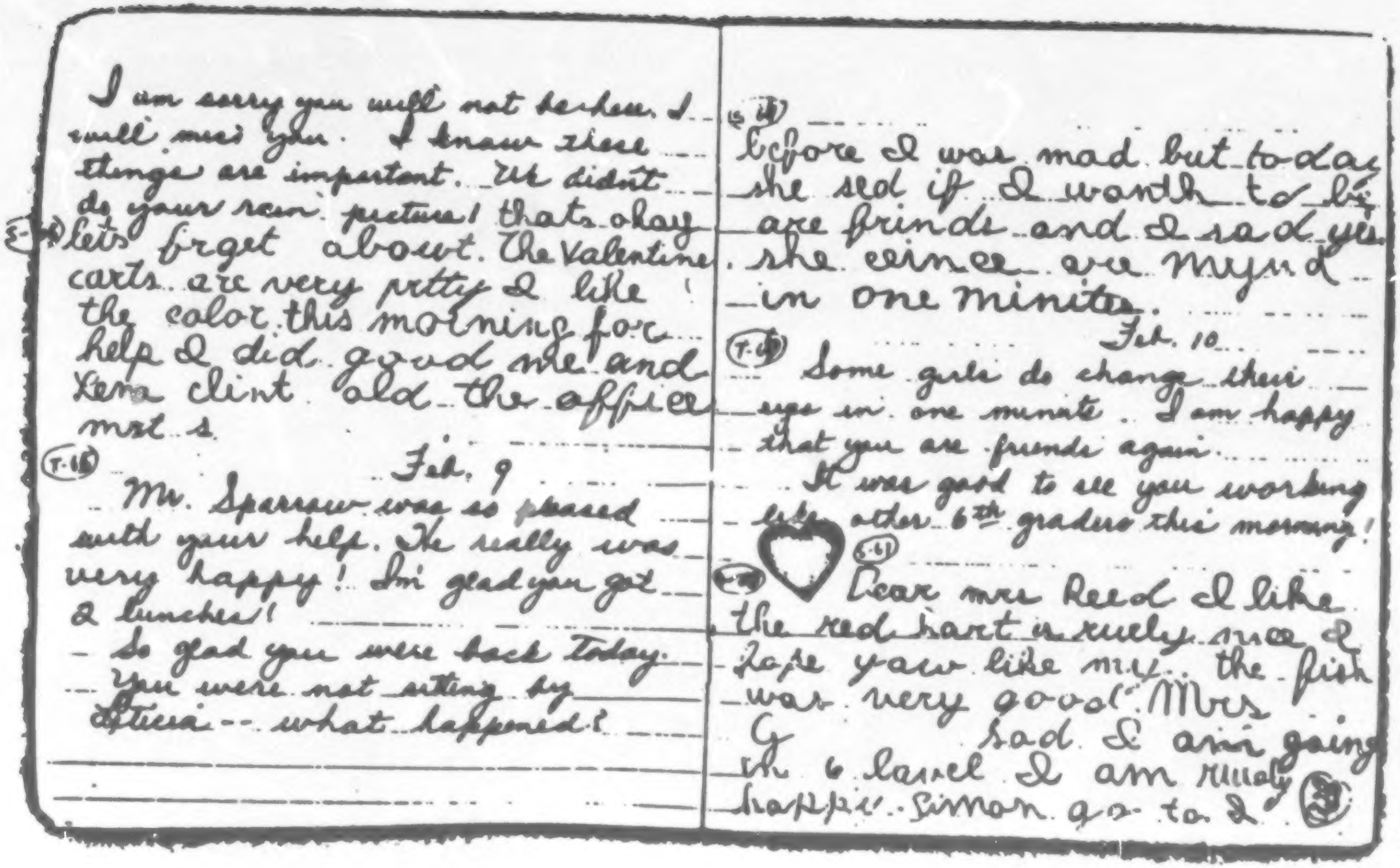
In her interview it appears that Laura is aware of her progress:

Staton: *Do you think your writing in the journal now is different from at the first of the year?*

Laura: *Yes. At the first of the year I was writing about things not important. But now I'm writing about important things. Like, if I have a problem I tell it to Mrs. Reed.*

Staton: *Why did you change?*

Laura: *Sometimes at the beginning she would ask me questions. I started writing about these things, and I started doing better.*



I am sorry you will not be here. I will miss you. I know these things are important. We didn't do your rain picture! thats okay lets frget about. The valentine carts are very pretty I like the color this morning for help I did good me and Xena clint ald the offiee mst s.

(T-15) Feb. 9

Mr. Sparrow was so pleased with your help. He really was very happy! I'm glad you got 2 lunches!

So glad you were back Today. You were not sitting by Teresa -- what happened?

Before I was mad but today she sed if I wanth to be are frinds and I sad yes she einee are mynd in one minites.

Feb. 10

Some girls do change their eyes in one minute. I am happy that you are friends again.

It was good to see you working like other 6th graders this morning!

(S-61)

Dear mrs Reed I like the red hart is ruely nice I hope yaw like my. the fish was very good. Mrs G sad I am going th 6 lavel I am ruely happy. Simon go to 2

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Laura--dialogue journal text

S-66
Feb. 10

before I was mad but today she sed if I wanth to be are frinds and I sad yes. she ceince are mynd in one minutes.

T-66
Feb. 10

Some girls do change their eyes in one minute. I am happy that you are friends again.

It was good to see you working like other 6th graders this morning!

S-67
Feb. 11

Dear mrs Reed I like the red hart is ruely nice I hope yaw like my. the fish was very good. Mrs G- sad I am going in 6 lavel I am ruealy happy. Simon go to. I wish yaw a very happy Valentine to yaw and your asmont.

happy Valentine

T-67
Feb. 11

I love your Valentine. It is so beautiful. The red name and the red heart are so pretty. I like it so much because you made it for me! Thank you. It is one of my favorite Valentines.

I hope your weekend is fun and you come back on Tuesday ready to go to level 6!

S-68
Feb. 17

Yes am ready. and I think I am goin to be good in 6 level and I hope I an going to be better and to learn more. am glad yow like the Valentine card then I give yow. I hope we do

T-68
Feb. 17

I am going to keep the Valentine you made for me! It is so pretty!

Did you like helping Mr. S- today? He said you were a very big help. That is so good.

Will you like to paint the wall outside of our school?

S-69
Feb. 18

Yes I like to help Mr. S- it was a very fun. I like to paint the wall. the new boy in are class is very lanly. every bety danth like armenean. but the armenean are very smart. Mrs. I am get in a diet because am fatt Leticia is waeching every thing I eat and I hop I can be skiny because is good. I hope the spelling bee is ese for me because if is harh I cant do that.

S-69 (ctd.) The spelleng I got only one but the second one no I am mad ruealy mad.

T-69 Feb. 18 Why are you really mad? What happened?

In the spelling bee I give you words from your spelling list. Study them so you can do well.

I have to diet, too! I think I have about 5 pounds I need to loose.

Thank you for helping to get the things for art from my car. It will be fun -- I think.

S-70 Feb. 19 Today I am so happy because yesterday my father sad he was going to by a new wasengmashin then yesterday he came with a new car a beg new car is a Honda and she has the radio. Leticia like to talk abowt me yesterday she sad every thing abowt my diat to the boy I danth like that I am sorry if I danth write a lat because I did not have the time.

T-70 Feb. 19 How nice! A new car! What color is it? Did you take a ride in the new car?

I'm sure Leticia did not think when she told the boys about your diet! She is so thin she does not need to think about a diet so she does not understand how you feel. Tell her!

S-71 Feb. 23 Yes I did have a ride the color is green is a nice car write for four people I ruealy like thath car. I am going to bye a album for the stamps beg so I can put olt the stamp then I have the album is going to be very nice and in ordor.

T-71 Feb. 23 Oh, a green car sounds so pretty. It is fun to have a car so you can see more of Los Angeles.

Yes, having an album helps you to keep your stamps in order. You can enjoy them more when they are in an album because you can see them easier.

The material you brought for art is lovely! We are so lucky to have you in Room 11. You are very generous.

S-72 Feb. 24 Today we are going to do art. I love art is fun and we do know how to do ruealy good my puppet is ugly.

T-72 Feb. 24 I did not see your stocking figure but ugly is cute, too! When you get it all done it will be very nice!

Are you working on your ocean report?

S-73
Feb. 25

Yes.

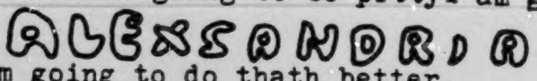
I bat my album is ruealy nice I put the stamps old in ordor. I am going to be better in Math. I haus rong in a Spelling I af to learn same ani thinks then I danth now.

T-73
Feb. 25

Yes, you do have so many things to learn. That is why I fuss at you to do your work all of the time!

I'm so happy you are in level 6 in reading. That is very good.

S-74
Feb. 26

Mrs Reed I think Reading is good I wish my Alexsandria letter is going to be prttyI am going to do liche this  I hope they like I am going to do thath better.

T-74
Feb. 26

The class has decided to do block letters -- so you will do one of the letters. I think the letters will show up very well, don't you? We did not decide the colors to use did we?

S-75
Mar. 3

no no no no

I am sorry if I did not write the yornal I got the new album for stamps Leticia thas not like to sells the pinats is fun. Mrs Reed my mother sad wen the scool is finish she is going to put me in a Catalic scool do you think is good for me meayby I cant find a teacher like yaw the catalic school have ald bad lady wen I go there I af to find new frinds and I like to be with my frinds from this school?

T-75
Mar. 3

Yes! It is good to sell peanuts and trail mix. It helps our school and it is fun, too.

I think it is good for you to go to a Catholic school. You will find new friends and the school will be smaller than the Junior High School near here.

You can work hard and no old teacher will be mean if you are working!

S-76
Mar. 4

I think yaw are write I better work hard so no bety will be men with me. I hope Leticia is not seck. my plant is broke I danth know who did thath I miss Leticia she ruealy

T-76
Mar. 4

Yes, I'm sure Leticia is sick. She looked sick yesterday.

If your plant is broken do re-plant it. It will grow.

I miss Leticia, too. I think she misses us, too.

SU KYONG

> . . . the least literate can begin to use language effectively when they begin to take control of their own ideas (and perhaps not before). Being able to write involves having something to say for one's own purposes. (Hendrix, 1981, p. 68)

Su Kyong's dialogue journal exemplifies that of a student who begins the year at such a low level of English proficiency that it is often difficult to understand what she has written, and there are few signs of interaction. Nonetheless, it is very clear that she has plenty to say, and she draws on the knowledge that she does possess of English to communicate.

Su Kyong entered Room 11 late in the school year, about a month after arriving from Korea. She had spent three weeks in New Orleans before moving to Los Angeles and had very little knowledge of English. It was somewhat unclear whether or not she should be in the sixth grade at all, because her mother was not sure of her age, but thought that she was about eleven. At the end of her first year her performance in class and her SES scores were so low (see Chapter One) that she was kept in Mrs. Reed's class for a second year. The journal writing analyzed in this study comes from her first year in Mrs. Reed's class.

Su Kyong started out learning the most basic skills in English--her name, address, phone number, etc. Mrs. Reed's goals for her were simple--that she learn to understand English enough to master the basic skills and that she feel more confident about herself. Even more shy than Laura, Su Kyong was very dependent at first; she wanted to have an adult with her all of the time, would often cry in school, and would periodically come over just to hug Mrs. Reed.

To bolster her confidence, Mrs. Reed gave her a Korean tutor for math and arranged for Su Kyong to take on various responsibilities---tutoring a Korean student in the third grade, working in the "lunch shack," taking messages to the office, etc. She also took every opportunity in the journal to bolster Su Kyong's self-concept. For example:

S-8 *Im sundary curing the hare Im so sad Im gllaing*
I no liek Im so gllaing

Translation:
[On Sunday, I got my hair cut. I'm so sad. I'm
crying. I don't like it. So I'm crying.]

T-8 *Your hair looks very pretty! I wish my hair*
could look as pretty as yours.

- - - - - -

S-29 *today we do the speling test*
But I delen [didn't do]
may Homework. Im mad maby
Mrs. Reed dont like me.

T-29 *I do like you! I like you very much!*
Why do you think I don't like you?

Much of Su Kyong's dialogue journal is difficult to read, as can be seen in this exchange in January. Mrs. Reed is able to pick out a couple of words ("Japanese Town," "my head hurt") and make a comment, but the majority of the entry is unclear.

S-34 *sunday I go japanyes town so clan day got so lal thing Im*
doing big thlay town plas pepll is dong by thly peple I
going chlch ably sunday so peple to like go to the chlch I
like see the amraca amare today I can do not thing I don wat
can I do my had is sik math time I like the story math room
I can reed I have to stay in the room I like go to my room.
My had is hord litle nax to wag we are 5 days dot com to
shool I want to go to the home sume time s I hayto sk Im
litle skull and

T-34 *I am glad you are back. I missed you so much.*

I like to go to Japanese Town, too. Did you eat there?

I hope your head does not hurt. I miss you. At noon I had a meeting and I could not let boys and girls come in. You can come in on Tuesday noon.

For the most part, there is very little evidence of improvement during the year in Su Kyong's mastery of spelling or grammatical forms. Even at the end of the year, her sentences are generally ungrammatical run-ons with inappropriate punctuation. Her spelling also remains poor, although spelling is the area in which she makes the most improvement. For example, she progresses from "liek" and "lick" to "like"; from "lillo", "lilo" and "littl" to "little"; from "fleand" to "fliend," and many of her words, although misspelled, are easier to decipher than they were in the beginning. Later in the year she is sometimes aware of and able to pick up on Mrs. Reed's spelling, as in this example, where she first writes "rikit" and then after seeing the spelling of the word in Mrs. Reed's reponse changes to "rocket."

S-77 *satrday I want to the Disneyland is so fun I riying the car and alplane and cups and the rikit is so scar . . .*

T-77 *You really had a fun weekend. Did you like the rocket ride best of all? Was the water cold when you went to the beach? Is your friend the same age as you?*

S-78 *Yes miss reed I like that rocket. is so scar and is fun I like that rocket and I like drave the car Do you want ther? and how many Do you want ther? . . .*

Neither is there much evidence of any real interaction in the journal, although Mrs. Reed tries to draw Su Kyong into conversations in a number of ways. She tries asking questions about subjects that Su Kyong brings up. She asks tag and yes-no questions almost exclusively to make responding easier. But until the end of the year, she gets no response at all. Below, in S-8, for example, Su Kyong ignores Mrs. Reed's two questions and introduces a new topic.

S-7 *today linch tim Im daning so fun lola to and Janny to going*

T-7 *Yes! It is fun to dance at noon! Were there any others from our class there?*

Today you read and we tape recorded your reading. Was it fun?

S-8 *Im sunday curing the hare Im so sad In qllaing I no liek Im so qllaing*

Su Kyong does not ask any questions either until the end of the winter sample, when she ends her entry with a request: ". . . mis Reed cay may have one spelling book."

Probably the major benefits of using dialogue journals in ESL contexts are derived from the interactive exchange that is possible between the teacher and student. This interaction allows the student to use English in authentic communication, in a relaxed, ungraded, and untimed situation. It may be that if Su Kyong had been able or willing to interact more in the journal, she would have shown more progress with the forms of English. It is difficult to know why there is not more evidence of interaction. It is possible that with students whose English proficiency is very low, the mere act of communicating anything in writing is challenging enough, and that interaction and signs of improvement in forms must come much later. The very important point to be made in Su Kyong's case is that she does communicate in her journal. She has many things to say, and she expresses herself openly about a number of different topics:

her conflicts with other students:

S-2 *today I am mad for lura*
she is bat gril shes not
my fland she not nays

[Today I'm made at Laura. She's a bad girl.
She's not my friend. She's not nice.]

her frustrations:

S-8 *Im sundary curing the hair Im so sad Im gllaing i no liek Im so qllaing*

[On Sunday, I got my hair cut. I'm so sad. I'm crying. I don't like it. So I'm crying.]

her feelings about school:

S-34 *. . . nax to way we are 5 days dot come to shool I want to go to the home sume time s I hayto sk Im litle skull . . .*

[Next week we don't come to school for five days. I want to go home. Sometimes I hate school. I'm a little scared.]

her excitement about her trip to Disneyland:

S-77 *Yes Miss reed I like that rocket. is so scar and is fun I like that rocket and I like drave the car Do you want ther? and how many Do you want ther?*

While her forms may be weak, her vocabulary is rich and varied and once deciphered, her ideas and feelings are clear.

It is crucial when we read the dialogue journals of beginning English learners that we focus on their message, lest we become so preoccupied with form and whether or not there is interaction that the message is ignored. In Su Kyong's case, Mrs. Reed accepts and does her best to respond to those messages, trusting that the forms will follow. And, as a matter of fact, they eventually do. Su Kyong stayed in Mrs. Reed's class a second year. This entry comes from November of her second year:

S-26 *today I am so happy I got now* [new] *frind*
and shes name is Len she is nice girl
I like to get now frind but I got lot
of my frend.

The forms are still not perfect, but she has come a very long way.

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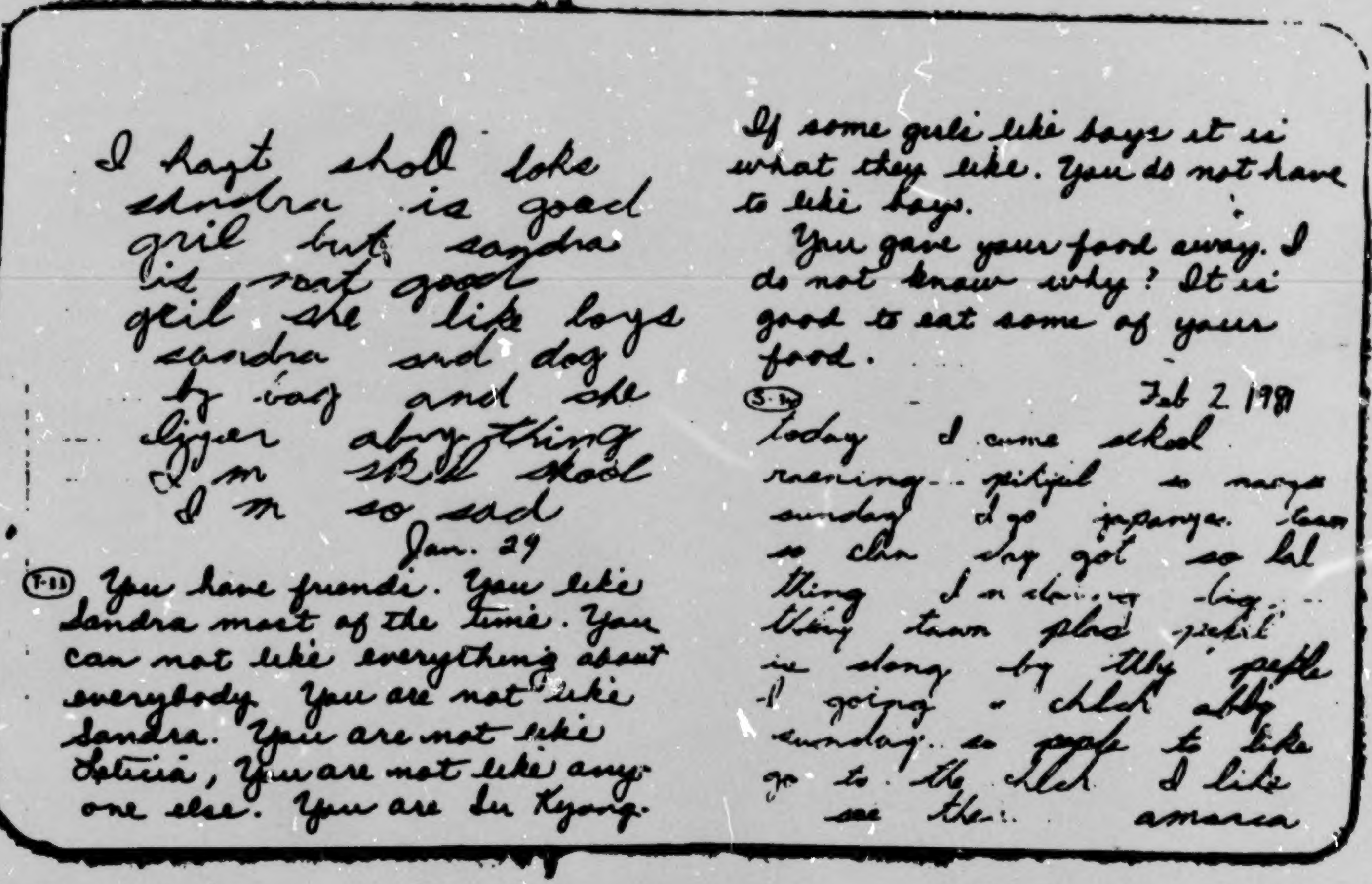
Su Kyong--dialogue journal facsimile



I hazt shol loke
sndra is good
gril but sandra
is not good
gril she lik boys
sandra and dog
by bag and she
lijjer abything
I m skil skool
I m so sad
Jan. 29

(T-11) You have friends. You like Sandra most of the time. You can not like everything about everybody. You are not like Sandra. You are not like Leticia, You are not like any-one else. You are Su Kyong.

If some girls like boys it is what they like. You do not have to like boys.

You gave your food away. I do not know why? It is good to eat some of your food.

(S-14) Feb 2 1981
today I come skool
rnening pitjul so narye
sunday I go japanya. [illegible]
so chn day got so lal
thing I m [illegible] big
thing tawn plas pipil
in slong by tlly pefle
I going a chlch atly
sunday so pepl to like
go to the chlch I like
see the amarca

105

106

Su Kyong--dialogue journal text

S-34 Feb. 2	today I come sckool raening pikyul so naeyse sunday I go japanyes town so clan day got so lal thing Im doing big thlay town plas pepll is dong by thly peple I going chlch ably sunday so peple to like go to the chlch I like see the amarca amare today I can do not thing I don wat can I do my had is sik math tame I like the story wath room I can reed I have to stay in the rom I like go to my room. My had is hord little nax to wag we are 5 days dot com to shool I want to go to the home some times I hayto sk Im little skall and
T-34 Feb. 2	I am glad you are back. I missed you so much. I like to go to Japanese Town, too. Did you eat there? I hope your head does not hurt. I miss you. At noon I had a meeting and I could not let boys and girls come in. You can come in on Tuesday noon.
S-35 Feb. 3	today I see the jernol I like you you are naes techer you are rokes like my aney my antey is Korea shes to nayse today I reed small bear hes little bear he thik hes name I think he dot like hes name
T-35 Feb. 3	Thank you! I would like to be like your Aunty! What is the bear's name? Do you think he needs a new name? Do you remember when you came I called you Kwang Shu? That is my grandson's Korean name. Your name is a little bit like his!
S-36 Feb. 5	today yestoday I dedt Jernel but today I raylt Jenel I can rayt Jenel bycus I can rayt
T-36 Feb. 5	Yes, yesterday you didn't turn in your journal. I am glad today you are writing in your journal. You are using some good words in spelling. Do you study at home?
S-37 Feb. 6	today I cee the journal I wot wied Journal thes time I going to hom I lose my Journal and my pencil box than I so mad and mis reed fort tings no I nat plit the dusch
T-37 Feb. 6	Yes, you were feeling bad because you couldn't find your journal. Now you will put your journal in your box every day!
S-38 Feb. 10	sunday and satheday sunday raning and monday is raning but today is not raning but sum is come may beis battr
T-38 Feb. 10	Yes, it feels good to have the sun shine again! I missed your journal yesterday. I like your Valentine sack.

S-39 Feb. 11	today lunch time I bling my lunch than leticia got cacap I titlnad and she go here is your cacap tan I got mad I hay her.
T-39 Feb. 11	That was not nice. When you bring your lunch don't sit by Leticia. You could eat your lunch in the room. We had stamp club today. You could eat with us. Thank you for the Valentine! It was very pretty.
S-40 Feb. 17	monday we go to the circus this so fan I see the lion they sckle me and they have elepon and so play woman dansing and horse is dansing sofan and dog jump the jomplo so fan
T-40 Feb. 17	The circus is fun! I am afraid of lions, too. I am afraid of tigers, are you? Dancing ladies make every circus show pretty. I would be afraid to dance around those big elephants. Would you? It would take a dog a long time to learn to jump a jump rope wouldn't it?
S-41 Feb. 18	today Im doing the pe I nabor cach the boll.
T-41 Feb. 18	There were several people who never caught the ball. Another day you will catch the ball.
S-42 Feb. 23	today I looke the jernol is doly if I do the now jernol and if this jernol is doly my har is not clyn if I do the my now jernol I dont wont doly jernol and today moning sandra is mad me oumus shes borsday I have to got the pljons is her borsday
T-42 Feb. 23	Can you make a big, big birthday card for Sandra's birthday? She would like that. I see your word study list in your journal. I am happy you are studying it. If you keep writing you will get a new journal.
S-43 Feb. 24	today Spelling Bee I fligt the I so I no the spelling
T-43 Feb. 24	Yes! The spelling bee was very hard. I can see why you would be frightened!

KEMMY

Kemmy's mother is Vietnamese, his father Chinese. Before coming to the United States from Vietnam, he lived for a while in Hong Kong. During the school year he lived with his grandmother who spoke Chinese and no English. Thus he spoke Chinese fluently and limited Vietnamese.

Kemmy was truly a beginning student in many ways. It is doubtful that he was literate in either Vietnamese or Chinese. He told us that he knew only how to write in English, and it appeared that he had never been to school--in Vietnam, in China, or in the United States. Even though he came to the U.S. sometime in the Spring of 1981, he did not come to school until the end of October. Apparently, he was given lunch money and sent off to school, but didn't go. Getting him to come to school consistently at all was a major accomplishment.

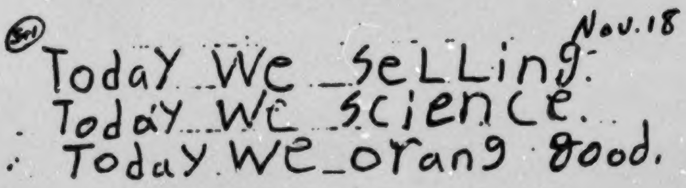
When he first came to Room 11, Kemmy didn't speak at all. The speech teacher couldn't test him because when he was sent to her, he still didn't speak. Thus it took a long time before anyone could determine the extent of his language ability. The only way that Mrs. Reed knew that he was learning anything was that he quickly picked up certain finger gestures from the other students. When they chided him, he stopped making them. When he began to speak, it was in short phrases ("How spell_____?" "Can I water?" "Bathroom, Miss Reed?").

While other new students in the class were learning English, Kemmy was learning the basic skills and rules associated with school attendance--when to sit down, when to listen, when and where to get a piece of paper, etc. As a result, he was almost totally dependent on others for help. As time went on, he adopted survival skills with which to function in class. He was enthusiastic about copying tasks, and when the assignment was to copy an outline from the board or to re-copy a letter, he would sit down immediately and begin. However, during individual reading time or time to work on individual projects, he would wander aimlessly around the room until someone came to guide him and he was given a copying task. His work in class gave the impression that he was going through the motions and accomplishing necessary tasks, rather than learning from them. His best friend was Andy (described above) and often he would do exactly what Andy did--if Andy cleaned out his box, Kemmy cleaned his; if Andy got some water from the sink, Kemmy did too.

When we consider Kemmy's situation, this behavior is not surprising. We don't know what traumas he experienced traveling from Vietnam to China to the U.S. He not only did not speak English, but was totally unacquainted with school procedures. At home he slept in the same room with the television, which usually stayed on very late, so he often came to school looking exhausted and put his head on his desk several times throughout the day.

Because of Kemmy's situation, his dialogue journal writing is both fascinating as well as helpful as a case study of the development of a beginning student. He had been in the classroom for nearly a month before he began writing in the journal. He was asked to write in his journal long before he actually started. One day he was kept in at recess as encouragement to begin. After that, he wrote every day. When he began, he either copied words from the blackboard or asked someone how to write a word, which he would then write in his journal. Mrs. Reed had a word box at the front of the room, so when he asked how to write a word, she wrote it on a card and put it in the word box so he could look it up later if he needed to. Kemmy's first entry was on

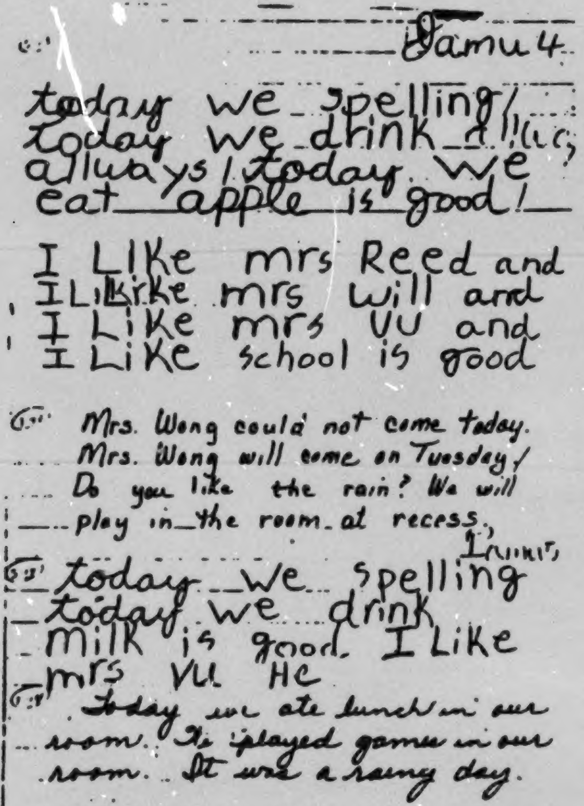
November 18 (Mrs Reed wrote the date):



Nov. 18

Today We selling.
Today We science.
Today We orang good.

This beginning gave Kemmy a pattern with which to work and on which he could build. We can see in his thirteenth and fourteenth entries that he used that pattern and established new ones (I like . . .").



Jamu 4

today we spelling/
today we drink allic,
allways/today we
eat apple is good!

I LIke mrs Reed and
ILiKrke mrs will and
I Like mrs VU and
I Like school is good

Mrs. Wong could not come today.
Mrs. Wong will come on Tuesday/
Do you like the rain? We will
play in the room at recess.

today we spelling
today we drink
milk is good. I Like
mrs VU He

Today we ate lunch in our
room. We played games in our
room. It was a rainy day.

Kemmy's writing at that point was like telegraphic speech, consisting of nouns, verbs and adjectives, with few inflections. He had asked for help with many of the words. He did not need to seek help every day, however, because he had established some "routines" or formulas, chunks of language that he could plug in when he needed them. For example, his fourth entry read:

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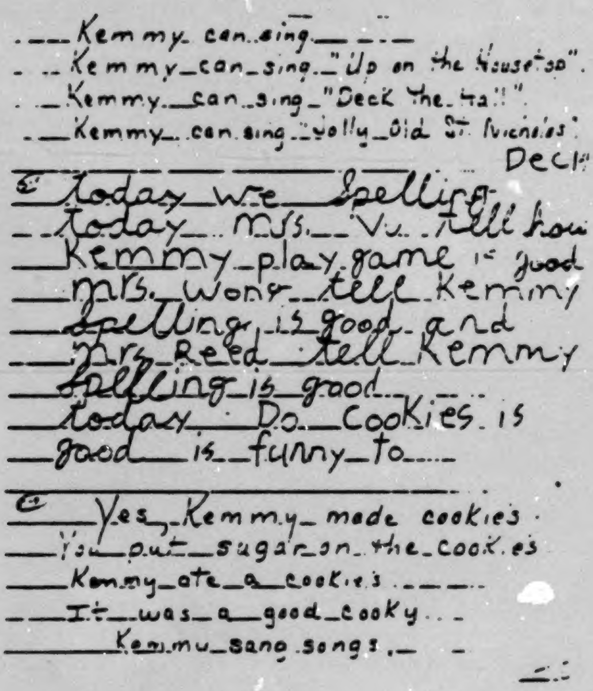
S-4 *I am sorry Mrs. Reed spelling.*
Today we drink milk.
Today we eat apple.
Today we ate Burito.
I love my teacher and I love my grand-ma, too. I am happy back to school.

He had already learned "today we . . ." and simply plugged in the new words. Someone probably had helped him write "I love my teacher, etc." Now he had a new routine to use.

Mrs. Reed's writing to Kemmy was also quite simple. In her responses below, she also used a pattern to respond to his entries.



Kemmy can sing
Kemmy can sing "Up on the Housetop".
Kemmy can sing "Deck the Hall".
Kemmy can sing "Jolly Old St. Nicholas".
Dec.

today we Spelling
today Mrs. Vu tell how
Kemmy play game is good
Mrs. Wong tell Kemmy
Spelling is good and
Mrs Reed tell Kemmy
Spelling is good
today Do Cookies is
good is funny to

Yes, Kemmy made cookies.
You put sugar on the cookies
Kemmy ate a cookies
It was a good cooky
Kemmy sang songs.

Note also that she referred to him by his name rather than with "you." She knew that Kemmy would respond to seeing his name and want to read what she had written when he saw it. As the year progressed, however, Mrs. Reed noticed that Kemmy started referring to himself as "Kemmy" (e.g., "Kemmy he likes spelling."), so she started writing "you" instead, and he eventually switched to "I."

In all of Kenny's entries so far we have seen him saying that something "is good." He probably picked this up from Andy, who also used various combinations of "is good" and "is happy" and "is funny," "is so, so, so happy," etc.

Sometimes Kemmy combined his routines in one sentence.

S-54 *Mrs. Reed you are good teacher and Mrs. Vu is a good teacher and Mrs. Wong is a good teacher I like three teachers is Mrs. Reed and Mrs. Vu and Mrs. Wong.*

Sometimes he seemed to be practicing pronouns.

S-53 *Mrs. Reed today Mrs. Vu come to room 11 and we so happy. Mrs. Reed today Mrs. Vu come back do you happy. Mrs. Reed today Mrs. Vu come back Andy he is so happy and today Mrs. Vu and Kemmy me so happy. Mrs. Vu come back and we so so happy.*

Sometimes he filled in his message with a list of words.

S-26 *I Like Chinese New Year is good and funny Chinese New Year to to much food chicken and apple orange grapes rice bean soup and Chinese New Year is good food.*

S-68 *Mrs Reed yesterday is David happy Birthday and thursday is Kemmy happy Birthday party cake duck chicken noodle coke watermelon.*

Sometimes he placed new vocabulary into "slots" in his routines.

S-26 *I like Chinese food is good. I like Amarica food is good. Korea food is good and I like Chinese New Year is good.*

It is important to note that in response to Kemmy's entries, Mrs. Reed continued to communicate. This is her response to S-26:

T-26 *Gung Hay Fat Choy!*
Yes! I like Chinese food, too!
I like almond cookies. We had Chinese Cookies in Room 11 on Monday. We made Chinese paper folds to look like a Chinese temple. We had fun.

Although her writing remained simple, she very early abandoned routines and patterns and wrote meaningful messages.

However, as long as Kemmy kept up his routines, it was impossible to know whether he understood what she had written. When at the end of the year he finally answered her questions and responded to her topics, it was clear that he had understood. Only occasionally would Kemmy break out of his routine. In S-24 he built on his old routine to write a new sentence:

S-54 *. . . everybody Like Mrs. Vu come back and every body like Mrs. Vu come back to Room 11 and we are so happy. Mrs. Reed do you Like Mrs. Wong come to Room 11 do you happy. Mrs. Reed I like Mrs. Wong tell we are doing spelling. Mrs. Reed everybody Like Mrs. Wong come to Room 11 tell Kemmy doing spelling is good . . .*

Translation:
[Mrs. Reed, everybody likes Mrs. Wong to come to Room 11 and tell Kemmy that he is doing well on his spelling.]

In these two entries he actually told her about something that he had done:

S-30 *Mrs. Reed I go to San Diego I see 10 seals the seals is funny I see one seals He jump pup catch the ball the seals funny and I Like the seals Mrs. Reed do you Like seals.*

S-64 *Yesterday we are put in the eggs grass and we are go foung the eggs and you foung the eggs and you can have is funny and is happy to.*

It would be nice to report that Kemmy finally dropped his Basil reader-like patterns to really communicate in the journal, but he never did. These routines were in his journal all year, and he went back to them from his little "bursts" of communication. It is possible that these routines provided him a chance to rest, so that periodically he would try a new form and then would reach a plateau and begin repeating himself until he was ready to step out to try a new form again. The repetition gave him something to fall back on.

> It's as if he is thinking, "Ok, I've learned this pattern. I've had my strokes for it, it's good, and when I'm thinking or when I'm spinning my wheels I go back to this pattern. Or if I have nothing to say I just automatically relax back into this pattern because I know it, and I don't have to think about it very much."
>
> Interview with Leslee Reed

Of course, this kind of writing was not Mrs. Reed's goal for the journal interaction. The following portion from a May entry (Kemmy's entries became very long as the year progressed) gives us a taste of what it must have been like to read his journal every day:

S-79 *today I go to school is good today I am happy Yesterday I go to my friend and play baseball is funny Yes I like my jacket today I going to auditorum and I dancing is funny and is happy yesterday I going to my friend play cards and I play audicye* [Odyssey?] *game in my house and in my friend house Mrs. Reed yesterday we go to buy the books and buy the book naem is Woodpecker is friend and is happy and I like to buy books . . .* [This continues for several pages.]

Much of the routine nature remains. However, there are also some changes. In this entry he answers her question ("Yes I like my jacket today"; she had asked if he liked his new jacket). He tells her not only what he is doing, but what he did yesterday ("Yesterday I go to my friend and play baseball . . ."), moving out of the school context. He seems to have finally found something to say.

There are no SES scores to report at the end of Kemmy's first year, because he couldn't be tested. Most of his classwork consisted of things that he copied and he never did homework. It is difficult to imagine how this teacher would know that Kemmy could write at all without the dialogue journal. He wrote in the journal every day and had very little help at the end of the year. He even got to the point where he sporadically wrote some interesting messages.

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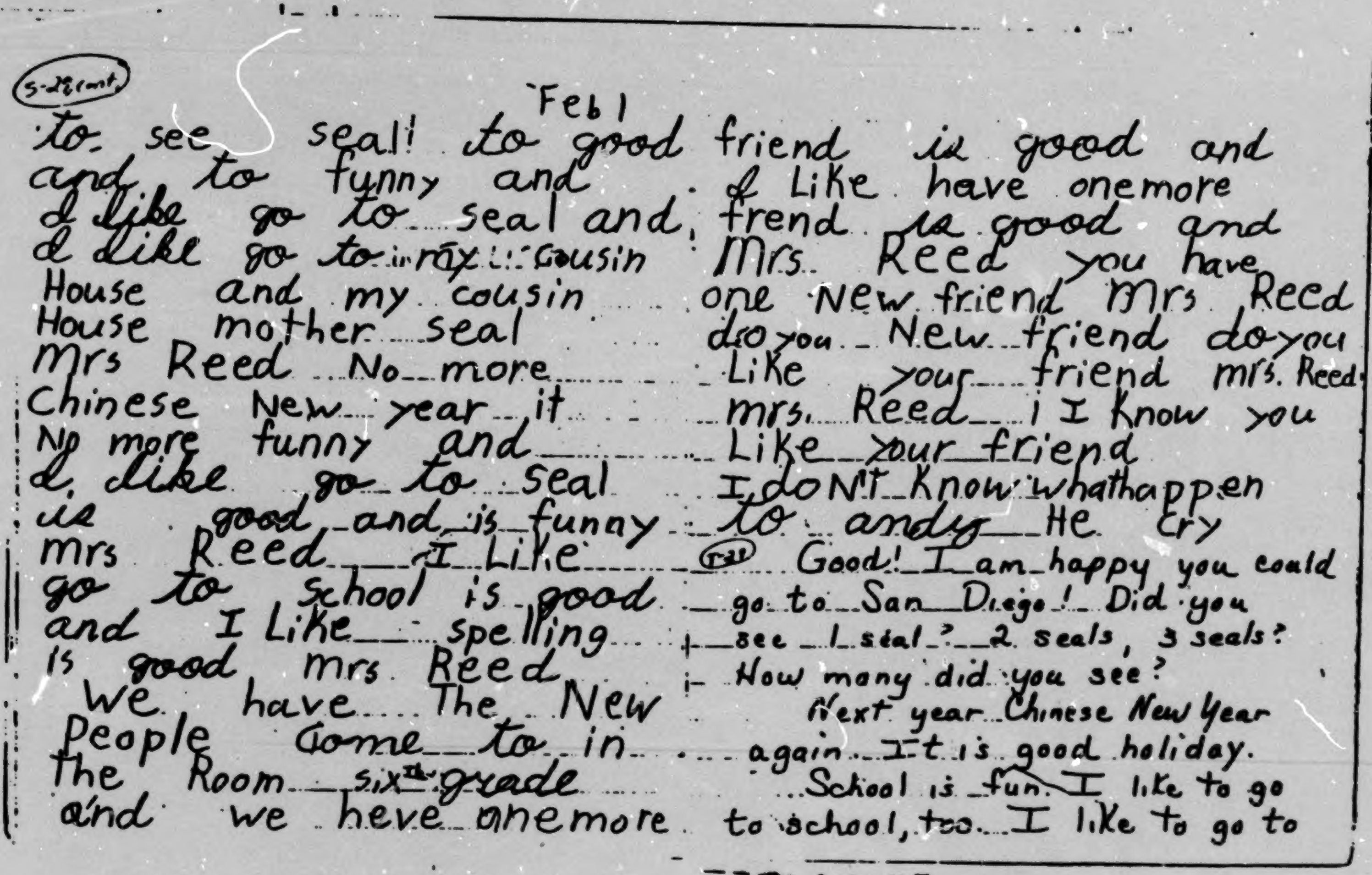


5-28 cont.

Feb 1

to see seal! to good
and to funny and
I like go to seal and,
I like go to my cousin
House and my cousin
House mother seal
Mrs Reed No more
Chinese New year it
No more funny and
I like go to seal
is good and is funny
mrs Reed I Like
go to school is good
and I Like spelling
is good mrs Reed
We have The New
People Come to in
the Room sixth grade
and we heve onemore
friend is good and
I Like have onemore
frend is good and
Mrs. Reed you have
one New friend Mrs Reed
do you New friend do you
Like your friend mrs. Reed
mrs. Reed I Know you
Like your friend
I doN'T Know whathappen
to andy He cry

T-21 Good! I am happy you could
go to San Diego! Did you
see 1 seal? 2 seals, 3 seals?
How many did you see?
Next year Chinese New Year
again. It is good holiday.
School is fun. I like to go
to school, too. I like to go to

Kenny--dialogue journal facsimile

16

Kemmy--dialogue journal text

S-29
Feb. 1

today we doing fo Spelling is good Mrs Reed fo Satdrday. I go to San Diego to see seal to good and to funny and I like go to seal and I like go to my cousin House and my cousin House mother seal Mrs Reed no more Chinese New year it No more funny and I like go to seal is good and is funny Mrs Reed I like go to school is good and I like spelling is good Mrs Reed We have The New people come to in the Room sixth grade and we heve one more friend is good and I like have onemore frend is good and Mrs Reed you have one New friend Mrs Reed do you New friend do you like your friend Mrs. Reed Mrs. Reed i I know you Like your friend I don't know whathappen to andy He cry

T-29
Feb. 1

Good! I am happy you could go to San Diego! Did you, see 1 seal? 2 seals? 3 seals? How many did you see?

Next year Chinese New Year again. It is a good holiday.

School is fun. I like to go to school, too. I like to go to school to see Kemmy learn. Kemmy is learning everyday.

We have a new friend. Our friend's name is Gihan. She can not speak English. We will help her. Thank you Kemmy. You are a good help. Gihan likes your help.

S-30
Feb. 2

today we Spelling Mrs Reed yesterday we dancing is good Mrs Reed I don't know your New friend Name I like Som pob and I like Mrs Reed and I like and and Som pob andy is my good friend and Mrs. Reed is my good teacher Gihan is the good friend and I like Gihan is my friend Mrs Reed do you like your Friend and Gihan is Mrs Reed good Friend and Mrs Reed I go to San Diego I see 10 seals the seals is funny I see one seals He jump pup catcht the ball the seals funny and I like the seals Mrs Reed do you like seals

T-30
Feb. 2

Yes! I like seals. Seals swim in the water. What do seals eat? The seal can catch the ball on his nose. Can Kemmy catch the ball on his nose?

My friend is Mrs. M-. She is my good friend. She can tell us about seals. She knows about animals.

Today we made a food chain. We can see what the animal eats.

S-31
Feb. 3

today we doing spelling is good job Mrs Reed can you see Ronald journal and He wright her journal is to much today we go to Room 18. doing the math is good job and I like go to Mrs S- Room 18 and

T-31 Feb. 3 Yes, Kemmy goes to Mrs. S- to do math. Mrs. S- is a very good teacher. Mrs. S- said, "Kemmy is working is math."

Yes, Ronald writes so much in his journal.

Kemmy writes in his journal, too.

S-32 Feb. 4 today we spelling is good and Mrs. Reed do you like the mouse today we go to Mrs S- Room doing math and I like doing math is good Mrs Reed I don't like mouse andy He don't like mouse and moM pob He like mouse today we spelling today we go to libraiy Gihan He ton't no How spelling andy is good boy andy tell Gihan Spelling is good Mrs Reed do you now Gihan He like friend and I like Gihan is my frend and andy Help Gihan spelling

T-32 Feb. 4 Andy and Kemmy do not like Mrs. M-'s rat. The rat was black and white. The rat was in the cage.

Yes. Andy helped Gihan. Can Kemmy help Gihan, too?

Mrs. S- likes Kemmy's work in math. Kemmy is working very well. Good!

S-33 Feb. 5 Yester day I don't have go to library today we Spelling is good Yester day Som poB He don't go to library andy going to library today we doing math is good

T-33 Feb. 5 Next time Kemmy can go to the library. Do you have your library card?

Kemmy is writing in his journal. Kemmy can print in his journal.

S-34 Feb. 10 today we doing Spelling is good Mrs. Reed whatpen to monday you sick Mrs. Reed are you feel good Mrs. Reed you come back and I go happy Mrs Reed you come back I am happy and I am happy Mrs Reed come back Mrs Reed and copy me Talking

T-34 Feb. 10 I was sick. I was not happy. I could not come to school. Now I am at school. I am happy! I am happy to see Kemmy.

Andy and Kemmy are not happy. We want you to be happy.

S-35 Feb. - today we spelling is good Mrs Reed today my not happy and Andy He happy SoM pob He happy

T-35 Poor Kemmy. He is not happy! Why? What made Kemmy feel not happy. I am sad when Kemmy is unhappy.

S-36 Feb. 17 today we spelling is good Mrs Reed maybe my grandmother she don't go see the movie Mrs Reed today I am happy

S-36 (ctd.) Mrs Reed maybe I can go to see movie Mrs Reed grandmother like come to school Mrs Reed I like go to school Mrs Reed andy copy me I Talking Mrs Reed can you see Gihan she doing is good today Mrs Reed today Gihan good and is happy Mrs Reed we doing is good Mrs Reed today we doday is happy today Sompob and andy and Khansone and Gihan and Kemmy doing is happy

T-36 Feb. 17 I am glad you are happy.

Grandmother can come to school when she wants to. Mrs. W- can help Grandmother.

Mrs. W- is not at school. Her Mother is sick. Mrs. W- has to help her Mother.

Gihan is learning! Kemmy is learning. Can you write your sentences?

S-37 Feb. 18 today we doing Spelling is good Mrs Reed and I tell my Grandmother come to school Mrs Reed. today I am happy Mrs Reed today we doing is good Mrs Roe andy doing is good and sompob doing is good and Kemmy doing is good and Gihan doing is good today **Gihan** and Khansone and Sompob and and and Kemmy is happy

T-37 Feb. 18 Yes, you, Sompob, Andy, Gihan and Khamsone are all doing well.

We are reading new words.
We are writing sentences.

Kemmy has pants on.
Kemmy has a shirt.
These are Kemmy's shoes.

S-38 Feb. 19 today we doing spelling today we doing is good Mrs Reed today I am happy Mrs Reed you have one Friend come to room 11 Mrs Reed do you Like your **NEM** Mrs Reed I don't Now your NeM Friend Name Mrs Reed

T-38 Feb. 19 My friend that comes to our room is Mrs. M-. She is nice. She tells us about animals. I like animals, do you?

I like the animal you made!

I like the story you wrote.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have attempted to provide some of the text and information about student personalities and purposes for writing which are necessarily distilled and lost in the analytical chapters. When one feature of the writing is focused on at a time—whether it be teacher strategies and features of the teacher's language input, language functions and question-response patterns, or features of grammatical morphology--some common features and threads of development can be found among all of the students and some generalizations can be made. As we have seen here, however, in many ways the writing and the development that occurs over time are very different for each individual. These differences undoubtedly stem in part from language and cultural background, facility with English, cognitive development, attitude towards school and Mrs. Reed . . . we could name a long list of factors. Also important, however, is how each student views dialogue journal writing and the purpose for writing. The student's view of the writing itself also affects the nature of the writing and its development over time.

For U Chal, the journal is a doorway to friendship with his teacher and a key to knowledge. He asks question after question, answers questions, and discusses a wide range of topics.

For Michael, the journal is a place to satisfy his curiosity about so many things and to give his many suggestions. He also finds a sympathetic listener, who helps him reason about and work through his problems.

For Andy, the main purpose of the journal seems to be to maintain a relationship. He writes at length about different aspects of his relationship with Mrs. Reed. He tells her all sorts of things, he creates images, words, even noises—he lets loose with language. This may be his way of being a good friend to her.

In the journal, Laura can seek and get reassurance that she is O.K., that she will pass to the seventh grade. As she gradually realizes that she _is_ O.K., she begins to open up and express herself.

Su Kyong complains, worries, and writes about her problems. In return she consistently receives positive feedback from Mrs. Reed.

For Kemmy, the journal may be a survival instrument. He has figured out that this is what you _do_ in school—you write a lot—and the journal is the place where he can do that. Sometimes Kemmy even breaks out of the survival mode and really communicates.

The point is that each student starts where all of us need to start when we write—they have a purpose for writing. In the process of accomplishing that purpose, the various skills related to good writing develop.

Note to Chapter Two

[1] Entries are numbered consecutively, so that S-1 is the first student entry, T-1 would be the first teacher entry, S-2 the second student entry, and so on. In order to preserve the authenticity of the text, errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling have not been corrected.

CHAPTER THREE

DIALOGUE JOURNALS--AN IMPORTANT CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT TOOL

Leslee Reed

(in collaboration with Joy Kreeft)

Each day as my sixth grade students enter the classroom, the very first thing most of them do is pick up their dialogue journals from a table at the front of the room and read my reply to their previous entry. Sometimes they are especially eager to respond, and they begin writing before they have even removed their jackets. Throughout the school day, the journals remain visible on the students' desks, available for the few moments when an assignment is completed and there is a bit of time to write.

During the past several years, these dialogue journals have become central to my teaching, and I have found them to be an indispensible aid to classroom management. For me, "classroom management" has many facets. Of course, lesson planning and general classroom discipline are essential aspects of classroom management, but even more important is maintaining an open channel of communication with my students. Students need the opportunity to express themselves freely about things that interest or concern them, to clarify things that confuse them, and to reason their way through troubling situations. And teachers need a way to know how events that occur in the school and at home are affecting their students and the whole classroom. In a typical school day it is impossible for a teacher to maintain this kind of communication with each student individually. Teachers also need to be able to adapt and expand lessons to meet the wide range of individual needs and skills that we find in one classroom. Dialogue journals provide these opportunities.

Dialogue journals have proved to be especially valuable in my present teaching situation, where I have students from many language and cultural backgrounds and with widely differing levels of English language proficiency in the same class. In the journals I can provide language and cultural support for these students, as well as the general academic and social support that all students need. The journal provides daily practice in communicating in English and helps to build students' confidence in using this new language, for their attempts are received without criticism and my responses are written specifically for them. It is usually not long before even the most reticent student is reading every word that I have written, and by their responses to me, I can tell how much they are comprehending of what I write and of what we are doing in class.

In this chapter, I will show the many ways in which dialogue journals serve as a classroom management tool in my culturally diverse sixth grade classroom, as:

1. an aid to lesson planning;
2. a way to individualize instruction;
3. a source of information about students' culture, activities, and needs;
4. a means for student self-expression;
5. a private channel for honest communication; and
6. a means for resolving difficult classroom situations.

As there is really no better way to demonstrate than through the dialogue journal writing itself, I will let samples from the journals of my students and me over the past few years serve to illustrate my points. I have included only the parts of our entries that are pertinent to the point rather than always including the entire entry for one day, but other than that our writing is unedited.

1. An aid to lesson planning

Many teachers have asked me how I find the time to write in dialogue journals every day. It does take time to write, but the journals actually help me to plan my lessons. In the journals I frequently discover what students are interested in and I plan my lessons around those interests. For example, this student's interest in our study of atoms and our discussion of them in the journal spurred me to spend more time on the study of atoms in class.

Student: *Last year in Brazil my science teacher say even if the atoms of one thing are the same atoms of other thing... one is different of other because the atoms are in the different places.*

Can the man cut the atom in two parts?

If the atoms are made with things smaller than the atoms why they keep saying the atoms the small thing in the world.

What the thing smaller than the atoms is made?

What a atom of Uranion can do?

Teacher: *If the atom is cut or smashed we get a mighty release of energy--which is very dangerous unless it is very controlled.*

We are learning more about the atom. The atom is the smallest unit of matter. That tiny unit has parts to it that don't separate naturally.

We use uranium atoms in our nuclear power plants.

Student: *Does we go to study more abot atoms?*

Last year I did a expirement to separet the water to hydrogin and oxgine, the class divide in 5 group and only one group separet the water.

Teacher: *Yes! We will learn about more elements. How did you separate hydrogen from the water molecule?*

Students' questions about lessons also help me to provide clarification about information that I have given in class, as shown by this series of exchanges:

Student: *How do the boat now what direction he go?*

Teacher: *The boat uses a compass to know the direction it is going. A long time ago the sailors on boats looked at the stars to tell directions.*

Student: *What map don't have distosan?*

Teacher: *The best map is the globe. It is too hard to carry--so the best flat map is the equal area map. It shows almost no distortion.*

Student: *If the polar map is disoriation why is good for planes?*

Teacher: *The polar map has distortion on countries near the equator. For countries near the poles it is very true. You ask a fine question. You are thinking!*

Student: *In 10 million year later the men do one other map?*

Teacher: *Yes, men will keep making maps! They are making new maps all of the time.*

Being a teacher of many years' experience, I invite my students to help me to become a better teacher, so they are encouraged to evaluate and even criticize lessons. When they do so, I often ask them to be more specific in letting me know why a lesson was dull or boring. This helps them to refine their critical thinking skills and pushes them toward greater clarity of expression. In the following three entries, this student made progressively more clear to me his opinion about our study of India.

February 29

I hope we don't keep studying about India to the end of the semester because truthfully I'm getting tired of studying about India every morning. I like studying about it and all but I think we are spending to much time on India and its getting kind of boring although I did like making maps. I think making maps are fun.

April 9

To tell you the truth I'm tired of studying India. It's an interesting country but that's what we usuly do every morning. Now its getting to boring for me. How long are we going to keep up this study.

April 23

Mrs. Reed, I don't mean to insult you but I know I can speak for a good percentage of the class when I say we are a little tired of India now. We study India about every day at school. It does have its interesting parts but up to a point. We have been doing India for about a month and personaly I hate it now. It was fine for a while but now its pathetic.

2. A way to individualize instruction

For dealing with individual differences, the journal is ideal. Even students who are new in class and know very little English can write something. These entries come from a new student from Vietnam. Extremely shy, she seeks help from another girl and with this help is writing every day and apparently getting help to read what I write back to her, because her responses seem to be in line with what I have written. (You will note that in my last entry I refer to this student by her first name, Helen. I frequently do this with students whose English proficiency is very low, because when they see their name written, they are eager to find out what I have written about them.)

Student: *I like you Mrs. reed*
(Helen) *Tuyet going to give Lien and I a test tomorrow.*
I like to learn English

Teacher: *Tuyet can help you to learn English. She can help you to understand the words. Ask her if you need help.*

Student: *I did talk to miss P.*
I like her
She like Lien and me too

Teacher: *Miss P comes to help you and to help me. She will come on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. She thinks you are learning well.*

Student: *I like to speak english very well*
I like Tuyet
I like Lien
They all nice to me.

Teacher: *Helen is nice to Tuyet, Lien and to Mrs. Reed.*
Helen is speaking more English everyday.
Today Helen multiplied three numbers by one number.

Student: *I like to play tetherbell.*
I have more fun every day.
I like to be a nice girl.

I have also had some students in my class who have been identified as educationally handicapped. One of my students had an extremely low I.Q., and yet she wrote pages and pages in the journal every day. Much of what she wrote was highly repetitious and didn't really have much meaning, but she was so happy when she was writing. It was a comfort for her to be able to do what the other students were doing and to feel as if we were communicating. Her entries were always difficult to read, but I would skim them, pick up a couple of ideas that I could recognize, and write about those. In the following exchange from our journal, I picked up on the fact that she was having some problems with a classmate, Laura.

Student: *yes mis reed I am going to stay in the room in risus I am going to lel lra if she went to stay in the room and I am going to stay in the clas and I am going to stay all all my time tebols and if you have word dily can we sted the tim tebols out sid and I am going to strat in my 2's and lra and me will strt in our 2's and if we lrn* *our 2's we will go to our 3 and we will cep goin intel our 10. and we are go to set to geter but some she is mad with rikee and she cris alet bit bcs rikee is reell men to me and lra and evy bity the room ms. reed lra toll me to tell you to tell her to stop bothin her. thek you ms. reed. win we wad dog are catrs devece was hteg lura and she seed that she was tellg her out her contry she seed that you cotry is ver agly and she was cring altilbit rikee is hetag evey bity and she dost letl dobity work and she dot lit me work and she lol me and lowra thot we was so stopet and that wat laura sist to me Ms Reed.*

Teacher: *Laura is a nice girl and she feels no one likes her. She does not speak English very well and it is hard to talk if you don't speak English so well. She feels so lonely--she needs you to be her friend. You are nice to her and she needs someone to be nice to her.*

The next student has spent previous years in special classes and is now in a regular classroom for the first time in his life. His writing and reading in the journal let me know how much he comprehends of what we are doing in class, what questions he has, and what his interests are. By knowing what he is interested in, I can captalize on those interests in class. Otherwise he is disinterested and wanders off or becomes a behavior problem.

Student: *Mrs. Reed did you put my letter with the others did you. Mrs. Reed where do you get Jim hunters book.*

Teacher: *I did put your letter with the others and I'm going to mail them.*

The Jim Hunter Books I buy at the bookstore. Do you like them?

Student: *Mrs. Reed please bring your Dinosaur book. can we have a race on Monday*

Teacher: *What kind of a race do you want to have on Monday?*

Yes, I'll try to remember the dinosaur book.

Student: *Mrs. Reed remember the race it is a runing race. do you know if we can play backet ball.*

Teacher: *Now I know what you mean. Yes, we will try to have a running race, too!*

We'll have basketball at one of our Recess and Noon game areas soon.

Student: *Mrs. Reed what was that red stuf. Mrs. Reed can we bring some books that i have Mrs. Reed where do you buy the books of Jim Hunter because my father likes then. Mrs. Reed why don't we paint the stars. wher did you buy the books of dinosaurs.*

The next student has also never been in a regular classroom before this year. She has a physical handicap and has had to be in a special class, so that her education has suffered. She still works with a special education teacher for two half-hour periods a week. Because she forgets things easily, the journal has become a way for her to review the answers to questions which she endlessly wants answered.

Student: *Will I all way go to Miss N on Tuesday?*
Today was a nice day.

Teacher: *I don't think you will keep on going to Miss N.*
I am hoping you will start going to Mrs. G. every day.
You'll like her, too.

Student: *When will 1 start going to Mrs G?*
Today was raining hard.

Teacher: *Mrs. G thinks you should keep on going to Mrs. N!*
They will decide soon.

Student: *I hope so. becase I want to learn more.*

Teacher: *You can help yourself, too! You can work on your times tables until you really know them.*

Did you learn more about magnifying glasses and telescopes today?

Student: *Yes. I learn a lot there.*

Teacher: *Are you writing 3 sentences?*

Student: *What 3 sentences?*
Why Miss N don't put me up today?

Teacher: *You should write 3 sentences every day in your journal.*
I think Miss N comes on Wednesday.

At the same time, I can push more advanced students to think more deeply about what they have written and write more in a response, as in this example from the journal of a better-than-average student.

Student: *We also saw a bunch of bats. They were very ugly. We swam in the Virgin River but it was rushing to much. When we came back we saw a yellow line dividing the sky in half. We saw blue sky and yellow sky.*

Teacher: *The yellow sky was over the city, wasn't it? What does that tell you about the air?*

I've never been to the Virgin River. Is it large? Did you swim in the Colorado River? I did--and do you know what happens when you swim in that river?

Student: *Yes, the yellow was over the sky. That yellow stuff tells me that people smog up the air. The Virgin River is rally big. In some places its muddy but were we were camping it was clear. It was like a rushing river. I didn't go swimming in the Colorado River. What happens if you swim in the Colorado River?*

Teacher: *Yes! Smog is just junk in our air.*

When you swim in the Colorado River you have to take a shower afterward because your body is covered with silt. (Silt is fine peices of dirt!). It is really strange because the silt is red colored . . .

In the journal I individualize my responses to each student's language level, as it is manifested in the student's writing. One way to individualize responses is through vocabulary choices. I often try to extend a student's vocabulary by using synonyms of words they use or by using terms that are even a bit more mature than theirs, as in this example (the words I am referring to are underlined here for the sake of the example; they were not underlined in our journal):

Student: *At the bottom of my jar the small pebbles are smaller than the top layer but they look the same.*

Teacher: *Then if there is a layer of smaller particles it is different from a layer of larger particles even if they are the same color.*

My questions also vary in the journals, depending on the ability of the student. One day when an owl was in the news, several students mentioned the owl in their journal entry for that day. Here are my responses to four different students, written to challenge or promote thought at different levels.

The owl's picture and story were fun to see. Do you think the owl is wise?

I've heard people say, "He's as wise as an owl!" I wonder why people say that? Did you think this owl was wise?

How do you think the author felt about the owl in that story? Did he write about the owl as though it had human or bird characteristics?

Which of the characteristics of the owl were anthropomorphic and which were avian? Do you think the owl did remember? Is that avian?

3. A source of information about students' cultures, activities, and needs

The dialogue journal is a rich source of information about my students' backgrounds. In response to my question, this student explains the Laotian New Year celebration. We had celebrated the American New Year and the Chinese New Year, and now we wanted to know how we could celebrate the Laotian New Year.

Student: *We go to the Laos Church bring food and money and give it to the monk. They'll take the food and money and give it to the poor people. Then we go home and tie our wrist with white yarn. But the older person has to do it this is how to make it. Get a silver pot, rice, flowers, boiled eggs, fruits, and candy. You put the rice in the silver pot then stick the flowers in and cut the white yarn 5" long and hang them on the flowers. After that put the foods around the silver pot then your finish. Let the older person tell you good luck. Then the women in the family cock and the mens fix the table. We cook rice noodle and melt meat put them in hot and spicy sauce. This is called cau poun.*

Teacher: *Great! I think it will be fun for everyone to learn about Laotian New Year. Miss T. can help us, too. Giving food and money helps others and is a good thing to do. There are always people who need help.*

The next student had been in our school for only about two weeks, and his entry here tells me much about his family. One day he and the other cooks at our cooking center were given one cookie each to eat with their lunch. I found out in the journal that this student had chosen to save his cookie and take it home for his whole family to share!

Teacher: *Did you enjoy making the cookies? How was the flavor?*

Student: *The cookies that we made tasted good. I hope we get to do it again. I shair it with my brothers and sister and my mom and dad. They all like it and I did too.*

The journal also lets me know where my students need help. This student from India is sharing with me the culture of her country, but at the same time she lets me know how much we have to do. Now alerted to a possible problem, I will watch her for the next few days to see if she is overburdened.

Student: *My uncle took the sari because Indian prints are different than we have here. Yes, silk saris are really nice and beautiful my mother had one silk sari that tore so she gave it to me and I always used to wear it and play with it and sometimes I ask her to give me a sari to play with and then I give it back to her.*

Boy! we really have to work on things we got to work on our brochure our pictures and write about them in our brochure. We have to work on making the cartoons table cloth its going to be fun isn't it? We have to work on our promotion ceremony . . .

Without the journals, I would not know how much of what we do in class each student really comprehends. One day, during the multitude of murders in Atlanta, I explained to the class that we would be having a moment of silence for the murdered children. I explained this carefully and many of the students took part in the discussion. The principal announced the moment of silence on the loud speaker, and we discussed afterward what we had done and why. That night, one student wrote:

> *Mrs. Reed today at reading Mr. Avak spook in speaker he said today is a something day and we have to think about something for one minute so I don't know what is that all about so can you tell what is all about please Mrs. Reed?*

He didn't understand what we had been doing! If we hadn't had the journals, I would never have known that someone had not understood. In the journal I had a chance to repeat what I had said and make sure that he understood.

When students tell me their need for help or supplies and materials, this not only helps me to know what I need to bring and which students I need to work with, but it helps to make them aware of the necessity for specificity and detail. If the request is not specific as to quantity, size, color and amount, I cannot be very helpful and the needed materials are delayed until the specifications are clarified.

Student:	I need one black, yellow, red, blue, white and brown construction paper not very big just normal size. What we're doing is very interesting.
Teacher:	*Our normal sizes of paper are: 3 X 5,* 8 1/2 X 11, 24 X 18 and 12 X 9. Which normal size do you need? Which thing that we're doing is very interesting?

In the next example, I tried to help a student with some work he was doing in the computer lab. I didn't understand how "emphasize" was being used in his program, so I needed more details. In the meantime, he solved the problem and explained it to me!

Student: *Mrs. Reed I don't get how emphasized sentences its to hard I work on the computer on emphasizing many times. Can you teach how to emphasize?*

Teacher: *By "emphasize" are you deciding which part of the sentence is important or which part of a paragraph has the sentence which is emphasized? Can you give me an example?*

Student: *I need to emphasized deciding which word in a sentence. Example. Take the right turn! If you take the left turn you would lost. I did the emphasized work five times and I finally got them right. Today I got five answers correct twice.*

Teacher: *Terrific! You have worked on the problem until you have it. If you took right out of your sentence you would not know which way to turn. Right is the word which really tells how to turn. That is why it has the emphasis!*

I'm proud of you! You really keep trying!

4. A means for student self-expression

Dialogue journals provide a place where students can write freely about topics that interest them. At times there are things that a student wants desperately to tell about. One day in class we discussed ghosts and whether or not we believed in them. This inspired one student to write a four-page narrative about ghosts. To have the teacher's time and attention long enough to relate that entire story in class is a near impossibility, but the journal gives time and space for those issues or topics which need retelling. Writing also relieves the class from having to sit and listen for a long time to just one person when they, too, have something which is of equal importance to tell. For the student who always has something of such importance that it cannot possibly wait, the journal provides the opportunity and the student is not denied the time in which to fully relate his information.

On the other hand, there are students who are reluctant to express themselves in class or on class assignments, but who really open up in the journal. This student, for example, is obviously overage for elementary school. His visa gave his age as being twelve, but he was growing facial hair and was as tall as I was. He compensated for feeling out of place by letting his hair grow and hang down over his face and arriving late every morning so he would not have to line up with the others and stand head and shoulders above everyone else in the line. The games the class played were an embarrassment to him so he took his journal outside, and during recess and noon play periods would frequently write, telling me the Vietnamese Folktales which he had learned from his Grandmother. Each day he carries on with the same story, with interruptions for daily comments on other things, but then picks up the story and goes on. He is probably reading the stories to be able to retell them to me. He is not copying--I've watched! I've learned so many folk tales from him!

Student: *A friend In Need Is A Friend Indeed.*

Duong-Le worked hard and as a result passed his exams and became a mandarin. He then lived in a sumptuous house and was attended upon by many servants, whereas Luu Binh extravagantly spent all his money and ended up in poverty. Destitute and unemployed he thought of Duong-Le. He believed that since he had help his friend when he was poor, his friend would never forget him. Besides, Duong-Le was a very good friend. He said to himself: "If I go to him, he will definitely help me!" continue . . .

Teacher: *Our Christian religion has a story much like the story you are telling me.*

Student: *When Luu Binh came to the mandarin's palace, he was not allowed in immediately. He had to wait outside for a very long time. At last, one of his friends servant came out and took him into a special room. Contrary to his expectations, his friend treated him . . .*

Recently another student, who was a gang member and did very little written work in school, explained to me in clear detail in the journal how to make a low-rider by "dumping the car," that is to reverse the spring shackles so the rear of the vehicle is higher than the front!

In my responses, I can help students to make their writing clearer. For example, this student from India is telling me an Indian Folktale. He obviously knows the story well, but his writing is not very specific, so I ask him questions to help him clarify his ideas.

Teacher: *Your story confuses me! On page 16 you write that Rama came and took Sita away in his chariot. Then Rama and Laksmana or Lasksmana are looking for her. Was Rama deceiving Lasksmana? Did he know where Sita was?*

Student: *No It was Ravana who took Sita away in his chariot. Part of the story: Rama and Lasksmana killed the Demon with ease. When he was going to die the demon said, "Burn me, then I will be able to help you." When they burned him a God came out of the fire and said that he was being in a curse of a man and said to them to go to Sugreev he will be able to help you. They started walking. I want to tell you something. Rama didn't know where Sita was. Hanuman was a talking monkey, but also the son of wind God. He saw Rama and his brother and thought that they were from his friends, who was Sugreev brother's kingdom . . .*

5. A private channel for honest communication

The privacy of the journal provides time and a place for discussion of events which are painful--the death of a family member, the impending divorce of someone very close, the fears that the family may not be able to stay in their home, or the agony of having a parent who is not succeeding in this country and is contemplating returning to the native country. For example:

Student: *My grandmother died. That's why I haven't been concentrating.*

Teacher: *I am sorry about your Grandmother. Did she live here? I'm glad you told me--now I understand.*

Student: *Ya! me too. I am sorry about my grandmother dying. I miss her . . . I'm sorry that I didn't learn anything because I was worried of my mother.*

Students can also tell me in private about their concerns. The next entry is by a Vietnamese student who is very apt in math. I had encouraged her to come in at noon to work with a special group of students who were especially gifted in math and were preparing to represent our school in the city-wide math meet. However, she felt ill at ease, and in her journal she explains why she doesn't want to continue with the group. Then she explains something of her past which I did not know and which really helps me to understand her need to belong and to be worthwhile.

Student: *I have thinking about 3 day. If I don't go to special class I won't be able to know alot of about math... if I stay they like too and I think they don't like me cause am not their friend and they smarter more than I do, do you think so? I can't help with this, I know it was my choice but I can't get which choice am I going to get, would you help me with all that problem?*

I wish my mother was born me as a boy. I can't do any thing just exactly like other boy does be-cause the girl can't play a lot of game. For example if the girl name A and other girl name B and they don't like each other so they are going tell other girl don't play with that girl she is bad so that that part I don't like to be a girl but the boy doesn't like that and that is one reason I like to be a boy.

I don't like to talk. Even at home I was alway sad and quiet. This is a thing I would never tell any body but you, the true is I don't have a parent in united states my parent they were live in vietnam and my mom was died by an accident when I was 7 year old and I had 1 big brother and 1 small one and 2 big sisters, after my mom died my dad start to work hard and I start get mumps, *fever. I am getting so ailing that my dad sond me to my grandmother to make me get better because there is no body take care of me, they all go to school and busy with their work. When I got better so I live with my aunt she had 1 daughter three son she does like me like she love her children's and she is the one I am living with now I tell every one she is my mom because she love me like my mom does . . .*

In response to the feelings of loneliness expressed below, I try to provide suggestions and possible solutions for becoming more outgoing and feeling more worthwhile.

Student: *Sometime I think that I am not with any body friend, they don't like me when I speak Vietnamese to Lien and Helen when we sit nearby them . . .*

Teacher: *You are their friend. They do not understand Vietnamese so they feel you don't like them. When everyone thinks the others don't like them we need to talk to each other more.*

Student: *but they don't act like my friend they separate I did felt lonely sometime. Just Lien and Helen are my friend if they were not here and I don't have a friend to play with . . .*

My mom bought chinese candy because I talk about our party so she bought for me, in this class they all like to have a chinese new year party, oh my mom said yesterday is Dec. 23 of chinese so then only one day more is chinese new year.

Teacher: *Some of the girls live close to each other so they are friends outside of school, too!*

Do you like to dance? Keo and Dominique get together and practice dancing. Would you like that?

The problem of "liking" someone in early boy/girl relationships is often painful and being able to write about it helps.

Student: *Dear Mrs. Reed,*
How you know when someone likes you very much? The person ask me for help most of the time on math. When we had Alex she would ask me to help her. Do you think Zulema, well you know for a friend policilely.

Teacher: *Because someone asks you for help does not mean they like you particularly. Sure it means they know you are smart and you are helpful, but as for liking someone a lot, it doesn't show that they do or that they don't.*

Student: *Dear Mrs. Reed,*
I know what your saying but she's always with or near me.

Teacher: *Then enjoy being near her without worrying about whether they like you a little or a lot.*

After a unit of study on smoking, this Laotian student seems to want to share with me her decision not to smoke and perhaps to get my approval or to let me know that she is doing the right thing. Very shy, she would never have told me any of this in person.

Student: *Ellen asked me if I want to smoke and I said "no thank"*

Teacher: *Great! I am glad you said, "No, thank you!" You don't need to ruin your body.*

Student: *Many people ask me if I want to smoke I said no but my friends keep asking me she said if I'm not smoke with her, she said she not be my friends forever and I said I don't like you to be my friends. But she just walk away so am I.*

Teacher: *That is very sad! You feel bad because you want to have friends. Friends who try to get you to smoke are not good friends!*

The written exchange also provides me a way of complimenting a student for a particularly well-done bit of work, a positive behavior toward another student, or the fulfillment of a responsibility in the classroom. A new piece of clothing warrants a comment which, written in the privacy of the journal, is savored by the student, and does not make someone without a new piece of clothing feel that his own clothing is somehow not as good.

Student: *I had a little trobel with my homework. The word puzels I almost finished it, but Im missing a couple. I think this is going to be a fun week. . . .*

Teacher: *. . . I will help you with your homework today if you like. . . . You look so pretty with your blue earrings and blue sweater! It is good to have you back!*

The next student had privately given me some poems that she had written. She did not want anyone in the class to see them. Using the journal to compliment her makes the compliment permanent, and I hope encourages her to continue if she chooses.

Student: *My poems aren't really good, I think there're not so good mostly because I don't make them interesting.*

Teacher: *Your poem that I read was very good! You have a good lilt or movement. In addition there is a pleasant sense of action! You should continue to write--don't worry about "making" them interesting. Just put down what you feel.*

Since the journal provides a direct channel of communicatioon with me, students know they can use it to express whatever feelings they are experiencing, no matter how negative. For example, a student who is reprimanded in class may use the journal to deny that he or she is guilty of the offense or to explain why or how that particular action came about. If the student is very angry, the journal may become a place to vent that anger, and some students may even declare that they hate me or the things I have done, as in this entry:

> *I have not read any of the stuff you wrote because I hate reading what you write to me. I am nearly done with the thing on the outline. I hate the outline. I made it the way you told me. Now it looks like a bird with a striped skirt on. I don't like it anymore. I used to like it when there was no dum feathers on it. Now it looks so dum.*
>
> *Did you know that the same day I bought a record my brother broke it?*

This student ended the entry on a positive, informative note. Frequently by the end of the day the same student who was so angry is busily erasing an earlier entry and writing a new one.

The following entry is typical of a student who is moving and experiencing ambivalent feelings about wanting and not wanting to move. The intense emotions during this time are often expressed as hatred in the journal. This has happened under the same circumstances so many times that now I am fully aware that moving is a very difficult time. But what a neat way to vent one's feelings!

Student: *no my mom hasn't told the office that I am going to move. I with I didn't move but my mom wants to move because my family is over there at montebello. today is allmost my last day of coming to this school. I hope tomorrow I have fun because its going to be my last day. . . . I hate you miss reed ranold didn't even stay in at recess. its a good thing Im leaving. I hope theres no teacher like you in motebello high school is ronald going to stay in for recess tomorrow because if he isn't he is going to get it.*

Teacher: *You were really angry. I'm glad you were willing to write it! That isn't a fun way to feel. How can we keep you from getting so upset? I'd be willing to help you plan a way.*

I will miss you. I still wish you could stay here until school is out and then go to Montebello! Sometimes we can't do what we want to do.

When the students use the journal to complain, it allows me to make clear my reasons for my actions:

Student: *Why dont you never pick me for a monator. you always pick Ron and Alexander.*

Teacher: *I picked you to help in the office today. I can pick you for a monitor when you act like a 6th grader. That means leaving your toys at home and doing 6th grade work.*

Student: *thanks for peking me for a monator, I won't bring more toys to school. but can I have my rulbics cub back. PLEASE GIVE ME IT*

Teacher: *I haven't decided about your cube. I am sure you can work better in school and I think we need to decide how you can do better. Would sitting up closer to the front be helpful?*

6. A means for resolving difficult classroom situations

The dialogue journal permits me to stay on top of problems that may occur during the course of a day and to work with the student involved toward their resolution. The following exchange shows how one difficult situation was resolved in the journal. The writer, a gang member and more "sophisticated" than most of the other students in the class, was reluctant to go with us to the local Junior High for an orientation trip (the students would begin school there in mid-June). When I asked him in the journal why he had not returned the permission slip to go, he privately told me why. Seeing his predicament and realizing that to force him would be to create trouble for him and for me, I found an alternative activity for him. Can you imagine the destruction of his image had I made him go and walk around the Junior High with a group of sixth graders when he had told his girl friends there that he was a Junior High student from a different Junior High?

Teacher: *. . . there must be a reason.* [why he hadn't returned his permission slip] *If you have a good reason tell me and I'll see what I can arrange.*

Can we work out a plan so you won't need to be rude? I have the feeling you don't want to be rude, you just want some of the others to listen to you. Is that right?

Student: *No thats not right you know why I don't want to go to Virgil becaus I had three girl friends there and they thought I was going to King J.H. and if they see me they are going to be very mad. I hope I don't have to go with you.*

Teacher: *No! I did not know that you had told anyone that you were in Junior High. I'm glad you told me. I understand the problem. If they saw you with the 6th graders they would know you had been giving them a line! I will see what I can arrange.*

Student: *Thanks a lot I really apprisiated. If I don't go were am I staying will you tell me please. I hope I don't have to do the dance with the sixth grade. Thank you.*

Teacher: *How about playing the Guiero while we dance--how would that be? I was proud of you dancing with our class this morning. Was it so bad? You look very nice dancing.*

Student: *I think I don't look nice dancing. maybe you do but I don't. I don't want to do anything wile you dance. I hope you guys had a good time at Virgil thats to bad I couldn't go.*

The following exchange, from near the end of the year, comes from the journal of the same gang member. We are planning for the graduation ceremonies and he informs me that his "homeboys" plan to come. These are fellow gang members, and their reputation is not good. This exchange gives me a chance to make it clear that his friends must not cause trouble, even though he rather hints at it in the first part of the entry. Again, I can avoid trouble by knowing the situation and stating consequences.

Teacher: *Are your parents going to come to your promotion?*

Student: *No my parents arent going to come. some of my home boys are going to come because you don't know what may happen.*

Teacher: *What do you mean by "you don't know what may happen?" We've been doing this for years and nothing happens! We all have a good time and you get your promotion after the ceremony. So if anything happens during the ceremony--you may not get your promotion. I'm glad your friends want to come---but they can cause you a problem, too.*

Student: *No they wont theire already vets they have babies they wont start nothing. only if some one comes up to them. there just going to site down and watch.*

Teacher: *That's good! I hope they bring the babies! I really love little ones, don't you?*

If I need to reprimand a student, I often do it in the journal, rather than call the problem to the attention of the whole class:

Teacher: *Tuan feels you are pushing to get into the classroom and causing some problems. Will you watch yourself to see if that is happening?*

Student: *Yes I will watch myself to see if that is happening.*

Sometimes a student writes about a problem that another student is having, and I can offer some advice:

Student: *Quoc is really not doing any thing in the group.*

Teacher: *Could you show Quoc what he needs to get done? He does like to play, but if you let him know he is important he may work better.*

In the next entry I enlist a very bright student to assist with the temper tantrums of another student. This technique is very effective, as it allows the helper to feel confident that I understand the problem and that he is helping me. As this student is a leader in the class, his actions will probably be emulated by others.

Teacher: *Luan is difficult--and I'm sure he makes you angry. We all must help him. He has not been in this country a year--he is trying hard to learn a new language which he does not understand. Sometimes he gets so angry that we think he looks funny--and if we laugh his feelings are hurt. Life is very, very hard for him. So anything you can do to help is very important.*

Student: *OK next time I wont laugh at him when he gets angry even if he looks funny.*

Often the student involved and I can reason together about these situations and jointly find ways to avoid problems in the future:

Student: *today at lunch Toan punch me because he was out and everybody said he was out he said he was not out and he* *got mad and he got the ball he would not give us the ball and they try to fight the ball away but Tom and me said to talk to him but he still did not want to give the ball and he keep saying bad words to everyone. Someone knock the ball out of him because he was going to waste our lunch. Toan ran after the ball I hold him and he hit me. I did not want to hit him or I would be in trouble too.*

Teacher: *How wise you are! It hurts to be hit, I know that! But hitting Toan only would make him more angry. He knew he was wrong and he is not to play at recess or noon all week.*

Student: *If I hit Toan back he would get more mad he is going to hit me and I'll hit him then it will turn out to be a fight. If someone fights in school they could get suspended.*

Feedback such as this student gave me is very important in helping me to know that the student has internalized some of the processes of rational thinking that I have been introducing, and it encourages me to continue to promote these reasoning skills.

Conclusion

I must caution that all students do not immediately take advantage of this channel of communication that is open to them, and it may take a long time to reach or to assure a reluctant or even hostile student that it is all right to open up and communicate. The next series of entries comes from the journal of one such reluctant student. To show the monotony of his writing throughout much of the year, I have included here one page from his journal in October, November, and December. The other days of these months are much the same.

October

Student: *I hope we have a nice day today Miss reed and I hope we have P.E. and I hope we have a nice ricese and a nice lunch time and a good playtime.*

Teacher: Steve, let's not skip a page nor a line. That wastes paper.

Do you understand about a political and physical map?

We'll need to re-cover your journal. I don't want any gang names anyplace at school. You can do what you want at home--but here no one writes anything about clubs or gangs. [He usually filled one page of his journal with gang members' names and gang logos.]

November

Student: I wish we have a good day and I hope we have a good lunch time today and recess time I hope theres no trouble today.

Teacher: You were very angry with me this morning. You are not at school to play--even art is a way to learn. We measured and used a ruler to help us learn.

Student: I hope we have a good day today a good recess a good lunch time and a good playtime. I hope we wont get in any trouble.

Teacher: I am sorry you wrote this and did not keep your journal with you. You could help me so much if you would tell me in your journal why you are having trouble. I would like to make school easier for you by helping to solve some problems.

Student: I hope we have a nice day today a good recess time and a good lunch time. I am happy I am out of the gang and I dont have any more trouble with other gangs.

December

Student: My favorite program is happy days and the muppet show and different strokes and facts of life.

I hope you do record the tape of Durango Street. I hope we have a nice day today and a good recess time.

Teacher: I did record the first three chapters of Durango Street. Do tell me how you like it! If you want more recorded just ask--okay?

You are doing better in your work! I am so glad.

Student: I think you don't have to record because wene I start hearing it I get boored. I hope we have a nice day a nice resesse time and a good lunch time.

Teacher: *Thank you. I won't record more--unless you like it.*

You have Cathie's name all over your journal. Does that mean you like her? Is it the Cathie in our room?

However, to my great delight, later in the year he began to use the journal to communicate with me. It saved us both a lot of agony, for in the journal I could restate situations and make certain facts clear without causing him to lose his "macho image" in front of the other students. By the end of the year we were friends. Here is a particularly important "conversation" that we had.

February

Teacher: *You are someone very special to me. I'd love to take you home with me to keep you out of trouble. I'm afraid you'd be so bored you wouldn't want to come. I don't know what to do to help you.*

Student: *You could do nothing to help me becous I ron away from home so he wouldn't whip me. thursday I slept at my home boy's car and on Friday I slept in the some car i think ail go home today. And if he whips me I run again and that wornst be for five days it will be for a month. yesterday my homeboy told me you better go to school I told him alright then he told me you better go home to. then I said okey but if he whips me at all I'll run away again it wasn't fun running away from home. I didn't have fun at all. all the time I was thinking of my mom and my little brother. yesterday I was with my home boy at market Hughes. my mother and my father and my little brother came in. I douck down so they wouldn't see me me athey and didn't see me. right wene they were going to go in I went out the other doore and they didn't see me right wen they went in I ron to my home boys house.*

Teacher: *I feel so sorry for your Mother and Dad. I know they love you. Not knowing where you are must cause them a lot of worry. I'd be sick with worry if I were your mother. If your Dad didn't love you he wouldn't punish you. Parents who don't love their children never punish them because they don't care that much. It is not fun to have to punish your child.*

> *Today you left the school again and went to play the machines. You know you are not to do that! Mrs. S- thought you were here. If she catches you she'll call your father. Can't you wait and go play the machines at 2:15?*

As I hope I have made clear by opening up our journals to you in these pages, dialogue journal writing is the most important tool that I have for keeping my classroom flowing smoothly and for interacting daily with this richly diverse group of students. Dialogue journals have become such an integral part of my teaching that I'm not sure whether I could function effectively in the classroom without them!

CHAPTER FOUR

TEACHER STRATEGIES: THEIR EFFECT ON STUDENT WRITING

Robby Morroy

In dialogue journal writing students are assisted in the development of their topics through the written interaction with their teacher. Kreeft (1984a) shows how one student, a native English speaker, develops in the areas of topic focus and elaboration, creation of context, and interaction with audience through daily written interaction with a teacher over ten months' time. This chapter focuses on the particular strategies a teacher employs to assist students in developing topics in the course of the dialogue journal interaction.

Since the data for this analysis consist of samples from dialogue journals written by nonnative speakers of English and their teacher, we may expect to find certain characteristics of native speaker-nonnative speaker communication to be present. Research on informal spoken interaction between native speakers and nonnative speakers of English shows that there are many ways in which native speakers modify the structure of the interaction in order to sustain it and to avoid communicative trouble (cf. Long, 1980; 1981a; 1981b for a review of the literature and discussion of the issues). Although some of these modifications are clearly tied to features of spoken interaction (using a slow pace or pausing before key words, for example) and would not be relevant in written data, Shuy (1982b) shows that dialogue journal writing has a great deal in common with spoken conversation, and Kreeft and Staton (this volume) have found modifications in the interactional features of the dialogue journal writing of the teacher in this study, similar to those reported for conversations between native speakers and nonnative speakers of English.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the strategies the teacher in this study employs to sustain the dialogue journal interaction and to facilitate the development of topics by her nonnative students, and to present a method for measuring the effectiveness of these strategies.

Teacher strategies in dialogue journals are a function of both the abilities of the individual students and of the nature of the students' writing in the dialogue journals. Therefore, these strategies cannot be studied in isolation, but must be considered in the context of the communicative event that takes place between teacher and student. In order to provide this context for analysis, I chose a unit of analysis from the dialogue journals that will serve as a tool for the analysis of the teacher's strategies and the variables that influence the structure of the interaction. I call this unit of analysis a "topic chain," and I will use it to quantify and present the data.

Topic chains

The idea underlying the topic chain is that the teacher actively assists the student in the dialogue journal interaction to link together topically related moves within student entries. The term "move" has been used in earlier studies on discourse (cf. Coulthard's [1975] discussion of the use of this term by Sinclair, et al., 1972), but is modified somewhat for the analysis of the kind of written interaction studied here. A move, as used here, consists of one or more topically related acts. In order to describe how I decide when two acts are topically related, I will first review Brown and Yule's (1983) use of the expression "speaking topically," which is similar to the use of the term by Sacks (1968). Brown and Yule introduce the concept of a topic framework to characterize what is being talked about in a conversation. More specifically they state, "those aspects of the context which are directly reflected in the text, and which need to be called upon to interpret the text, we shall refer to as activated features of context and suggest that they constitute the contextual framework within which the topic is constituted, that is, the topic framework" (p. 75).

Two acts are topically related then, when they activate the same features of context, or when they are relevant to the same topic framework. Thus, a move consists of all topically related acts within one entry, even if there is an intervening act that is not topically related to any of the other acts in that entry.

The following example from one student entry and one teacher entry in the dialogue journal of Gloria, one of the students in the classroom studied, shows how topically related moves are identified:

S-139

S-R-34 1) I got two person that I am going to pick for the all-star game. 2) I am going to pick Rickardo and Bunny. 3) I do not know who my third chose is.

S-I-35 4) This weekend I might stay at my sister's place for three days. 5) I am going to see movies at her house. 6) She has on TV.

S-I-36 7) On Saturday I am going to get my white shoes.

S-R-34 8) I found the third person I am going to pick. 9) It is Jenny. 10) She is a fair player.

* * *

T-139

T-R-34 1) Your choices seem like good ones. 2) Ricardo, Bunny and Jenny are all good sports and they play well.

T-R-35 3) That should be fun! 4) That way you'll get to see more of Kevin! 5) Is he talking yet? 6) Does he have a name for you?

T-R-36 7) What kind of shoes do you want? 8) Sandals, glides, wedgies, or what?

T-I-37 9) Is the C.T.B.S. a hard test for you?

The two entries are labeled S-139 and T-139 for the student's and teacher's entries respectively. The codes for the various moves are given in the left margin (S-R-34, S-I-35, etc.). Acts are numbered consecutively for each entry (1, 2, 3, etc.).

The student's entry S-139 consists of three moves: S-R-34, S-I-35, S-I-36. The last three acts of the entry (8, 9, 10) are considered part of S-R-34, since they are topically related to the first three acts. These six acts are treated as one move. It is interesting to note that the teacher actually changes the focus of the topic in move T-R-35, acts 4, 5, and 6, but these acts are still topically related to the acts in move S-I-35. The teacher has here brought up a topic within the larger topic framework, because the same contextual features are activated by S-I-35, "I might stay at my sister's place." Since Kevin, mentioned in act 4 of the teacher's entry, is Gloria's nephew, the contextual features activated by "my sister's place" are still operative for the teacher's topic.

Some moves are labeled "I" and others are labeled "R." In order to determine who initiates topics and who responds to them, I define an initiating move (labeled "I") as a move that is not topically related to a move in an entry directly preceding it. A responding move (R-move) is one that is topically related to a move in the entry directly preceding it. A responding move is considered a continuing move when it is followed by a topically related move, or a closing move when it is not followed by a topically related move.

A "topic chain" is a series of topically related moves. These moves are influenced both by background factors which are external to the interaction and by factors found within the written interaction itself. This is diagrammed in Figure 4.1. The background factors are divided into characteristics of the participants--the teacher and the student--and characteristics of the activities the participants are involved in--home, class/school, and interpersonal. These background factors serve as production resources for the topics of interaction (Erickson, 1981) and exert an influence on the nature of the dialogue journal interaction.

The diagram in Figure 4.1 indicates that the background factors have their strongest influence on the initiating moves, but their influence permeates the whole of the interaction, since the history of the discourse becomes part of the (shared) background. Erickson (1981) found for an after-dinner conversation that topics discussed a week earlier became production resources for the current interaction. In these data, when Gloria writes in S-I-35 in the above example, "This weekend I might stay at my sister's place," various contextual features are activated that are part of the history of the interaction between her and Mrs. R, and Mrs. Reed refocuses the topic to Kevin (in T-R-35, "That way you'll get to see more of Kevin!") by making use of the (now) shared background.

The diagram of the topic chain is set up to read as a flow chart of decisions to be made by the analyst. The background factors are the

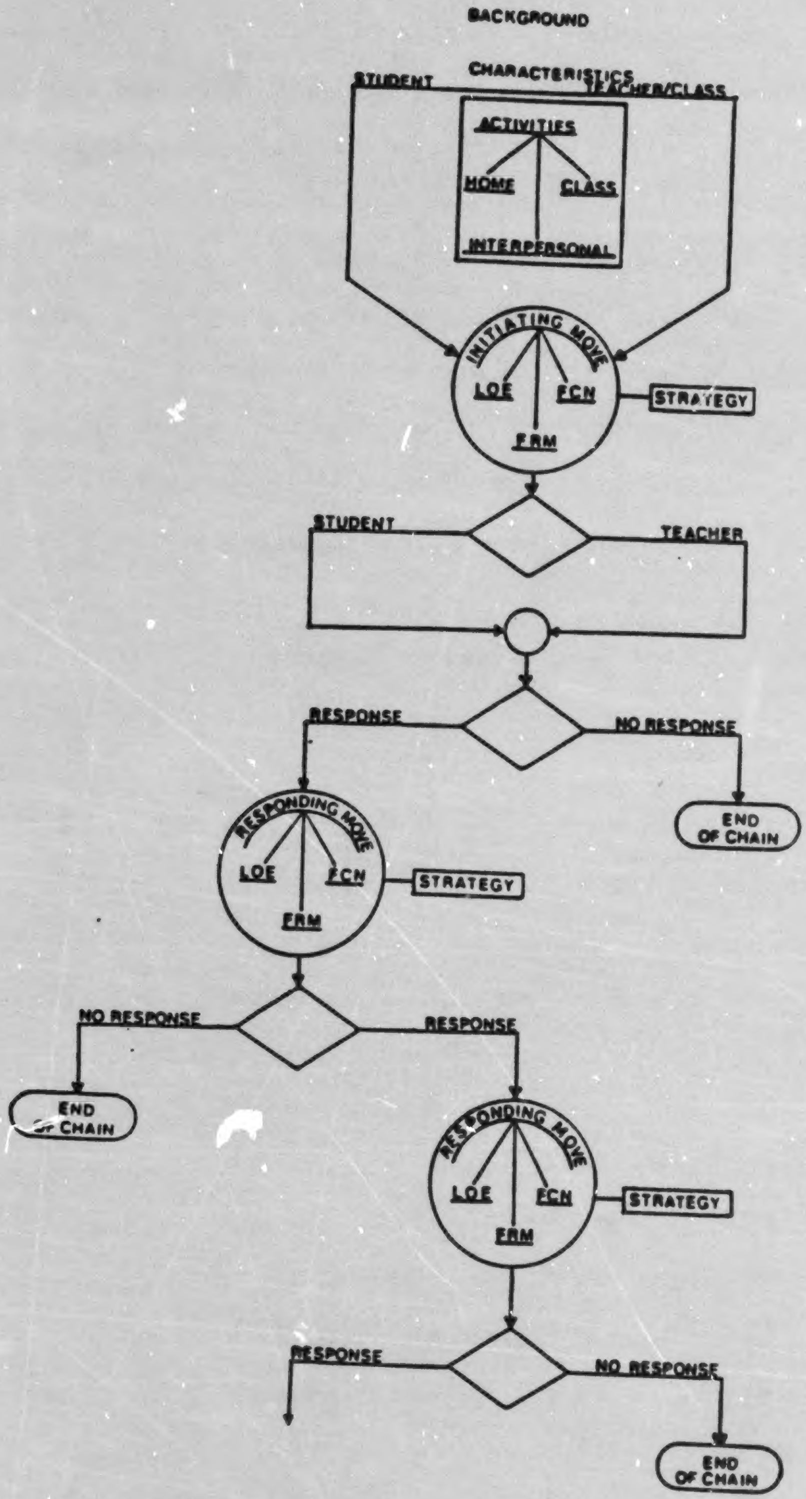

BACKGROUND
CHARACTERISTICS
STUDENT
TEACHER/CLASS
ACTIVITIES
HOME
CLASS
INTERPERSONAL
INITIATING MOVE
LOE
FCN
FRM
STRATEGY
STUDENT
TEACHER
RESPONSE
NO RESPONSE
END OF CHAIN
RESPONDING MOVE
LOE
FCN
FRM
STRATEGY
NO RESPONSE
RESPONSE
END OF CHAIN
RESPONDING MOVE
LOE
FCN
FRM
STRATEGY
RESPONSE
NO RESPONSE
END OF CHAIN

Figure 4.1. Topic chain.

input for the initiating move which is accompanied by a certain strategy. The initiating move has a certain level of correctness of English (LOE), certain forms (FRM: questions, statements) and performs certain functions (FCN: informs, complains). The initiating move is either student- or teacher-initiated; in either case it is followed by a response or no response. A responding move can be followed by another responding move and so on.

The three entries that follow, from Michael's journal, show graphically what topic chains look like in the actual data. The same coding scheme is used as in the earlier example, except that here the acts are not numbered.

S-8

S-I-1 . . . Mrs. Reed, where are you came from. Are you America Mrs. Reed.

S-I-2 I like everything map, and math, Language Mrs. Reed.

S-I-3 Mrs. Reed what is a stomato

S-I-4 Mrs. Reed, Do you like play Baceball, Basketball, or Kickball.

T-8

T-R-1 I was born in America. My Mother and Daddy, my Grandmother and Grandfather were born in America, too. About 200 years ago my relatives came from Spain, France and England.

T-R-3 The stomata are the little holes on a leaf that let the plant breathe. We breathe through our noses. The plant breathes through the stomata.

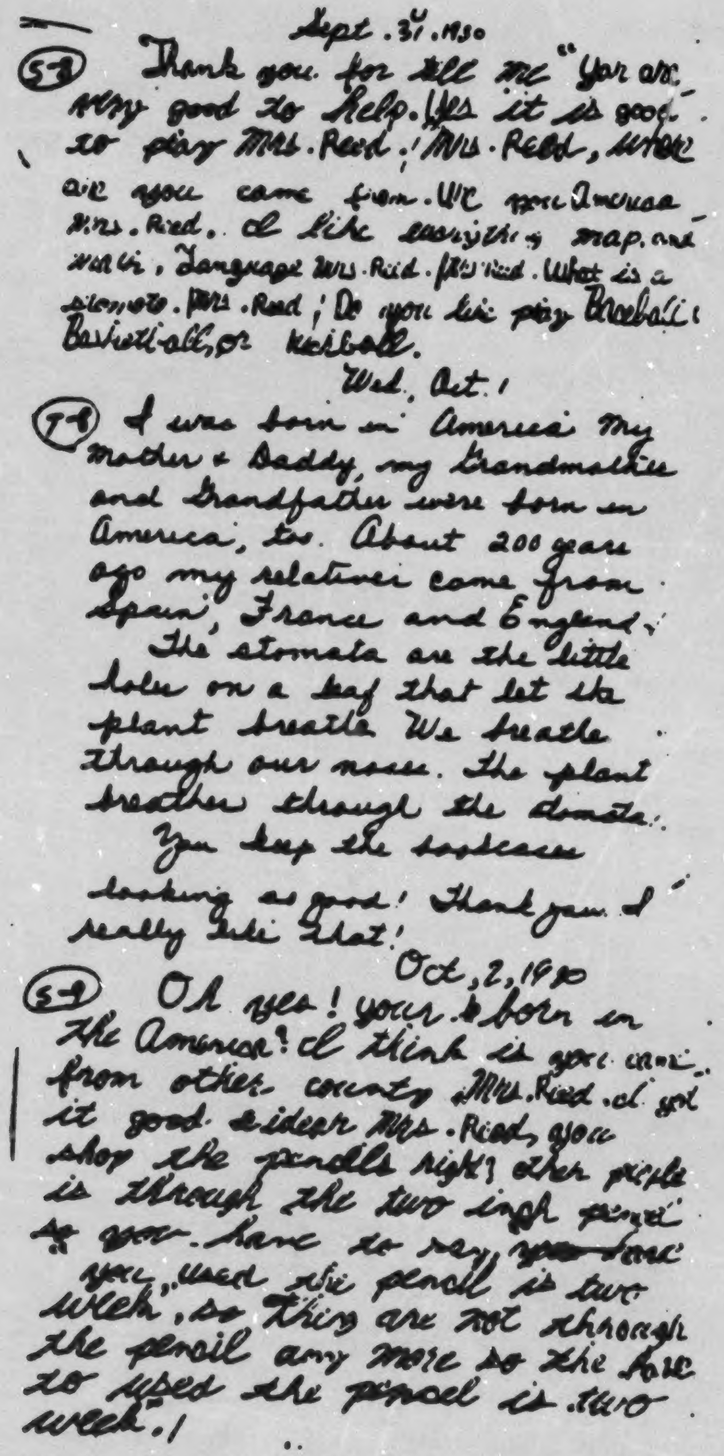
T-I-5 You keep the bookcases looking good! I really like that!

S-9

S-R-1 Oh yes! Your born in the America? I think is you cam from other country.

S-I-6 Mrs. Reed, I got it good ideas. Mrs. Reed, you shop the pencils right? Other people is through the two inch pencil so you have to say, you used the pencil is two week, so they are not through the pencil anymore so the have to used the pencel is two week.

Below is the actual page from Michael's journal on which these entries appear.



Sept. 31.1990

(S-8) Thank you. for tell me "You are very good to help. Yes it is good to play Mrs. Reed.! Mrs. Reed, where are you came from. We you America Mrs. Reed. I like everything map. and write, language Mrs. Reed. Mrs. Reed. What is a stomata. Mrs. Reed; Do you like play Baseball, Basketball, or kickball.

Wed. Oct. 1

(T-8) I was born in America. My mother & Daddy, my Grandmother and Grandfather were born in America, too. About 200 years ago my relatives came from Spain, France and England.

The stomata are the little holes on a leaf that let the plant breathe. We breathe through our noses. The plant breathes through the stomata.

You keep the bookcase looking so good! Thank you. I really like that!

Oct. 2, 1990

(S-9) Oh yes! your born in The America? I think is you came from other county Mrs. Reed. I got it good idear Mrs. Reed, you shop the pencils right? other people is through the two inch pencil ~~so you~~ have to say ~~you have~~ you "used the pencil is two week", so thing are not through the pencil any more so the have to used the pencil is two week.!

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The moves from this example can be drawn in a topic chain chart, which shows the relationship between moves more strikingly. The chart is presented in Figure 4.2 below.

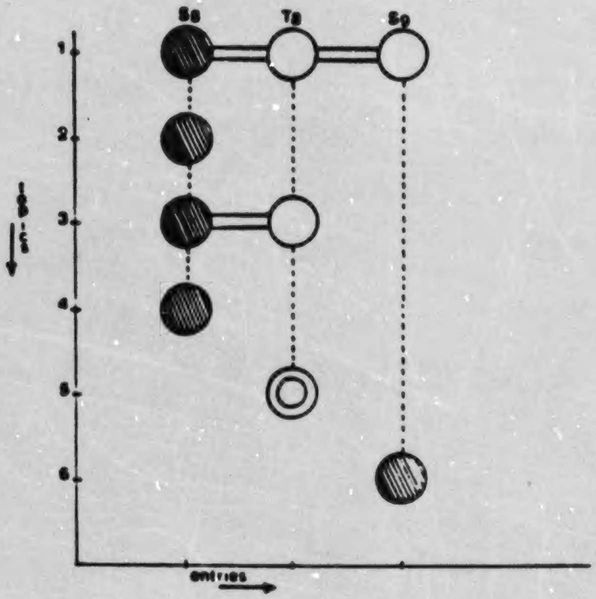

Figure 4.2. Topic chain chart.

Student initiating moves are shaded in the chart and teacher initiating moves are indicated by a double circle. Vertical dotted lines connect moves of the same entry; horizontal double lines connect topically related moves. Where no vertical line proceeds from a circle, it indicates that the move did not receive a response. The chart shows that the student moves that initiated topics 2 and 4 were not responded to; the teacher's responding move in topic 3 and her initiating move for topic 5 were not responded to.

Because dialogue journal interaction takes place in non-real time, the participants have time enough to produce more than one move per entry, thus opening the possibility for the maintenance of multiple topics at one time. Black et al. (1983) show that the temporal variable is the critical one for creating "multiple threads of discourse" in computer-terminal communication. Since the same temporal variable is operative in dialogue journal interaction, we may expect to find multiple topics in the data at hand. Michael's entry S-8, for example, contains four topics.

The main interest here is in the connections between teacher moves and student responses—the double lines between the teacher's move in T-8 and the student's move in S-9 (topic 1). It is suggested that by using certain strategies the teacher promotes both the number and the complexity of student responses. In the following section I discuss the various teacher strategies I have found in the present data that accomplish this.

Teacher strategies

Conversational strategies have received considerable attention in various disciplines within linguistics. Tannen (1980) compares the narrative strategies of Greek and American story-tellers, and Gumperz (1982) discusses intercultural differences in discourse strategies as well. The issue of what communicative strategies are, however, is still not resolved. Researchers label various communication acts as "strategies," but as Faerch and Kasper (1984) note, there is no clear consensus about which phenomena are to be considered as communication strategies.

Studies in second language acquisition focus either on the strategies used by the learner or those used by the teacher to facilitate mutual understanding. Faerch and Kasper compare two suggestions for defining communication strategies: their own "psycholinguistic" definition and the "interactional" definition as put forward by Tarone (1979; 1980). Both these definitions focus on the strategies used by the language learner in attempting to communicate in the second language.

Some discussions of strategies focus on those used by the native speaker or caretaker in conversation with a language learner. Long (1983a) suggests that modifications in the interactional structure of conversation are more important than intrasentential modifications in native speaker/nonnative speaker conversation. Gaies (1977) reviews "motherese" as a linguistic strategy in communicating with children, and notes that teachers employ a number of similar communicative and/or language training strategies in the classroom.

What I want to examine here are strategies the teacher in this study employs to continue the dialogue journal interaction and the degree to which they are effective. As I have remarked earlier, teacher strategies for promoting interaction must be studied in the context of the topic chain; the variables influencing the length and frequency of occurrence of topic chains must be considered before a reliable estimate of the effectiveness of teacher strategies to prolong dialogue journal interaction can be made.

I will first list the categories of teacher strategies identified in the dialogue journals and in a later section suggest a method for determining how effective each is in fulfilling the overall aim of sustaining the interaction. The categories have been labeled with the above studies in mind, but do not necessarily represent the views expressed in them.

Two general kinds of strategies can be distinguished: a global strategy whose operation can be seen when a relatively long series of turn-alternations is examined, and various local strategies that can be studied by looking at the teacher's moves.

The global strategy I will refer to by a label used by others, "selecting salient topics" (Long, 1983b). Long quantifies this strategy by determining the number of topics introduced by each participant. The participant who introduces the most topics has selected the most topics talked about. However, if we were to apply the same method to these data, we would find that even students who interact minimally with the teacher have a high number of topic initiating moves in dialogue journal interaction. It seems more meaningful, therefore, to determine who "selects salient topics" in the dialogue journal interaction on the basis of who initiates the most "extended topic chains."

Extended topic chains are those topic chains that consist of at least two moves by the initiator of the topic; that is, Student-Teacher-Student, Teacher-Student-Teacher, or other move configurations in which the initiator shows at least a willingness to continue the initiated topic chain. Such patterns show the potential of being about topics that both participants in the dialogue writing can engage in.

The examples below show parts of extended topic chains with the S-T-S and T-S-T move configurations, demonstrating how moves are topically related in extended topic chains.

Andy, S-T-S:

S-86

S-I-159 Today my pink shirt bring (with me) every body said "He pinky" he is very bad boy

T-86

T-R-159 I like the pink shirt! Do you like your pink shirt?

S-87

S-R-159 Today with shirt in "Playmate" anybody said "girls shirt", "playboy". I don't like you know, and you understand to me. Thank Mrs Reed. Goodby Mrs Reed.

U Chal, T-S-T:

T-142

T-I-11 How does your face feel? That ball bounced off of your hand right into your face. I do hope your face isn't bruised.

S-143

S-R-11 It didn't hurt much I had bad bumps in my head before. Today was Jung An turn to get the ball on his face.

T-R-11 Good! I was glad to see you this morning and see that you did not have a black eye or a swollen nose. I'll check Jung An in the morning to see if he has a black eye! We are learning to catch balls in an unusual way!

In order to determine who selects salient topics in these data, I have tabulated the total number of topics and the number of extended topic chains initiated by each participant. The result of these tabulations are presented in Table 4.1 below, for the three samples of the dialogue interaction which form the basis of the various analyses in this study (each sample period consists of twenty student-teacher exchanges; details on the samples for each student are given in Appendix II to Chapter One).

From the numbers in Table 4.1, in the columns marked "Initiated Extended Topic Chains," it is clear that most topics that are extended for at least three turns are student-initiated. Whether one looks at the total number of initiating moves or at the number of extended topic chains, it appears that the teacher does not select the majority of topics. On the average, 9.3 percent of all topic initiations develop into extended topic chains, initiated by the students, while 2.7 percent of the total number of topic initiations generate extended topic chains that are teacher-initiated.

An interesting comparison can be made between the two methods for determining who selects most topics in the interaction. When we

Table 4.1. Numbers of topic initiating moves and extended topic chains.

DIALOGUE JOURNAL	Fall		Winter		Spring		Total Across School Year		Percentage[a]
	Initiating Moves	Initiated Extended Topic Chains	Initiating Moves	Initiated Extended Topic Chains	Initiating Moves	Initiated Extended Topic Chains	Initiating Moves	Initiated Extended Topic Chains	
ANDY	44	0	156	5	39	5	239	10	3.9%
MRS. R.	8	0	5	0	5	0	18	0	-
KEMMY	70	2	118	4	85	4	273	10	2.9%
MRS. R.	26	0	23	0	23	0	72	0	-
LAURA	13	6	38	9	53	10	104	25	17.0%
MRS. R	14	4	13	2	11	2	38	8	5.6%
MICHAEL	46	5	64	16	64	11	174	32	15.9%
MRS. R.	8	2	14	3	11	2	33	7	3.4%
SU KYONG	26	1	31	0	26	4	83	5	4.5%
MRS. R.	8	0	11	0	9	0	23	0	-
U CHAL	23	8	22	10	13	7	58	25	27.0%
MRS. R.	11	3	9	5	12	8	32	16	17.0%
ALL S'S							931	107	9.3%
MRS. R.							221	31	2.7%

[a] Percentage of total number of topic initiating moves developed into extended topic chains.

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decide by the number of initiating moves alone, we find that for Laura, in the fall sample, Mrs. R. would be said to select the most topics, since she has 14 topic initiating moves to Laura's 13. However, by taking the number of extended topic chains as our measure we find that Laura selects the most extended topics (6, to Mrs. R's 4). Since we are interested in the teacher's role in promoting interactive writing, the second measure appears to be more appropriate for the dialogue journal interaction. It is necessary to go beyond tabulation of initiating moves alone in dialogue journal interaction because participants in this kind of communication must usually attend to multiple topics so that it may sometimes be physically impossible to respond to all topics brought up by the other interlocutor. This difficulty may be due to time constraints or other organizational matters. The students must write in their journals during transitional times in class, during recess or lunch, or after finishing other work and are not given a block of time to write during the day. The teacher, on the other hand, writes to each individual student at night, rather than during her regular working hours. Under such circumstances it seems that topic chains that are developed increase in importance. If the teacher promotes the development of student-initiated topics, she is employing a strategy that allows her nonnative students to actively engage in the interaction.

Allowing students to select topics for interaction is one of the most important teacher strategies to promote dialogue journal interaction. Dialogue journals, such as the ones discussed here, are essentially student-centered. Teachers using dialogue journals may unwittingly frustrate the interaction if they insist instead on having their students respond to teacher-initiated topics. For example, Blazer (presentation at CAL, 1984) studied dialogue journal writing in a kindergarten classroom and found a teacher in one of the dialogue journals she studied urging a student several times during the course of the interaction to answer her questions. Instead of attending to the teacher's questions, however, the student (who had previously been quite prolific) dramatically decreased in his writing, to a point where he almost stopped writing altogether.

Although the numbers of student-initiated topic chains in these data are sufficiently high to allow for the conclusion that the teacher does not select most salient topics, we have not yet explored exactly how this strategy promotes the interaction. Allowing the students to have the majority of topic initiating moves is a necessary but not sufficient strategy for promoting interaction. Actual interaction, that is the linking together of topically related moves, is accomplished by what I will refer to as local strategies. These are strategies that accompany each move in the topic chain. The local strategies that I have identified in the present data are the following:

1. Asking information and opinion questions;
2. Showing understanding by repeating, incorporating or accepting a student's move or part of it.
3. Using circumlocution or simplification;
4. Elaborating/adding information;
5. Requesting clarification/providing clarification;
6. Changing the topic within a larger topic framework;
7. Generalizing statements by the student;
8. Offering suggestions/a different point of view;
9. Evaluating.

I will discuss each strategy in turn.

1. Kreeft's ("The importance of teacher questions in written interaction," this volume) discussion of the various questioning techniques used by the teacher in the dialogue journals points out that the teacher's questioning strategies are more conducive to continued dialogue than those typically found in classroom interaction. Another feature of the teacher's questions is that they are often part of a larger move that contains other strategies as well. In such cases, I made a decision about whether it is the question specifically that is aiding in the operation of the overall strategy of the move before I classified it.

2. The teacher may incorporate, repeat, or accept a student's move or part of it as a way of showing understanding. In U Chal's journal, for example, his problem with the Fahrenheit scale leads to an exchange of information about the two temperature scales, Fahrenheit and Celsius:

S-84

S-I-5 I Brazil they only use Celsius they have Fahrenheit but they use Celsius to see the temperature to cook and the doctors use only Celsius to see the body temperature.

T-84

T-R-5 *You know Celsius better than Fahrenheit temperatures then, don't you?* We are going to be doing some thermometer reading here in the room. We'll use both scales.

S-85

S-R-5 I never read about Fahrenheit until I come to U.S. The first time I saw a film of doctor and they find that I monkey had a fever and when he got the fever his body temperature was 115° F but I thought they was talking about 115° C but now I know the different of Celsius and Fahrenheit.

(Underlining mine.)

U Chal, who has spent most of his elementary school years in Brazil, seems to imply that he knows more about Celsius than Fahrenheit. The teacher shows her under[illegible]ding by using the question which accepts U Chal's implication ar[illegible] comforting statement, "We'll use both scales" for thermometer rea[illegible]

Sometimes, however, the "understanding" the teacher shows is not shared by the student. In these cases, her move may yield a protest response, as in this example from Andy's journal:

S-85

S-I-135 Today play show is I don't like. This show is not funny.

T-85

T-R-135 The ICAP show was hard for you to understand. I can understand that you would not like it.

S-86

S-R-135 I understand show and I am not happy. This show is not hard.

(Underlining mine.)

Here, Andy disagrees with the teacher's "understanding" of his problem with the show. Such disagreements may set the stage for lengthening a topic chain, but this happens rarely.

3. The teacher may simplify her moves in various ways. With Kemmy, who is one of the most limited English proficient of the subjects studied here, she prints most of her entries instead of writing in cursive. Also, she uses simple sentences almost exclusively and may even use a "foreigner talk" feature such as using no article, but those cases are extremely rare. The following is a teacher move from Kemmy's journal:

T-42

T-I-81 Mrs. M- has two skulls. One skull was a bear. Did Kemmy see the bear skull? The other skull was big. What animal was that?

Simplification also refers to attempts to leave in-depth discussion of topics to the student, as in the following sample from U Chal's journal. The topic is inflation:

S-18

S-R-10 In Brazil the new car is 5000 dollar, in German is half of dollar but the inflation is more of United States.

T-18

T-R-10 Inflation is bad here, too. We wish inflation would go away!

S-19

S-R-10 In Korea one dollar is 650 yen but the inflation is more big of United States, the banana in Korea is one dollar in Brazil is 25 cent.

T-19

T-R-10 I bought bananas and got 3 for 29 cents! It is bad when inflation is so bad.

U Chal is making a comparison between the countries in which he has lived. In both T-18 and T-19 the teacher is supportive and offers general, rather than specific comments, thus allowing U Chal to add information and develop his topic in his own way.

4. The fourth category of the local strategies the teacher employs to aid the students in developing topics is elaborating or adding information. By using this strategy the teacher adds to the existing topic framework so that the possibility is opened to expand the set of points that can be discussed. The example below is from U Chal's journal.

S-84

S-R-2 Yes, I like to make reports if fun to make and at the same time we learn more about life in the ocean. I am doing the report about White Sharks then when I finish I am going to do about Dophins if I have time.

T-84

T-R-2 Dolphins or porpoises are unique animals. They seem to have a language.

S-85

S-R-3 I know and I read that scientist was stunding about dolphins language. Last year when I was in Brazil I was in the Beach and I saw a dophin dead on the sand and when I touch the skin is like sofet and then when I eat the lunch and I go to see the dolphin some birds was eating the dolphin.

T-85

T-R-3 The dolphins have even been trained to do undersea work for the Navy. They seem to have an intelligence. The birds help to clean the beach by eating the dead animals. The dolphin's skin has no scales—we expect an animal that looks like a fish to have scales.

By introducing the information, "They seem to have a language," the teacher has expanded the topic framework. Moreover, the focus of the topic chain has shifted from the report U Chal is doing to the contents of the report which deals with dolphins. U Chal can now expand the topic framework himself by adding his experience with a dead dolphin.

In her next move (T-R-3), the teacher repeats the strategy by adding, "They seem to have an intelligence." She also uses another strategy which I will discuss later—responding to U Chal's experience with a dead dolphin with more general themes, "The birds help to clean the beach by eating the dead animals," and, "we expect an animal that looks like a fish to have scales."

5. A strategy which the teacher rarely uses is to request clarification, as in the example below, from Michael's journal:

S-83

S-I-26 You know today moving U Chal put cards into every bag except Tony I know why U Chal put the cards every cards because he put cards into every bag so they don't margar him.

T-83

T-R-26 I am not sure what you said. U Chal put cards in everyone's sack so they don't margar him? What word did you put there? Please tell me.

S-83

S-R-26 Oh I forgot what you said about the Valentine you said if you want to give the cards is ok and you don't want give the cards is ok, too and I saw margar so I was wrong I did not think about what you tell me and I'm sorry about telling the UChal they margar him so I'm very sorry about that.

Although Michael's response does not really provide much clarification, the request does elicit it. More often, the teacher provides clarification when it is requested or when it is appropriate. In the following example, again from Michael's journal, the teacher provides clarification that is not explicitly requested.

S-37

S-I-47 Today I get the stamps I am very happy Mrs. Reed.

T-37

T-R-47 Mrs. B- liked your help! You earned the stamps. Are you going to start a collection now?

S-38

S-R-47 I want to collection but my mother does not buy for me.

T-38

T-R-47 You do not need to buy stamps. Save all of the envelopes that come to your house. Ask your friends to save their envelopes for you. Then you can get those stamps and trade them.

In T-R-47 the teacher explains how stamp collecting can work without costing money. From entry S-38 it appears that this clarification was needed because Michael seems to think that he can only collect stamps if his mother buys them for him.

6. A strategy which I pointed out earlier, in a sample from Gloria's journal, is changing the focus of a topic within the existing topic framework.

S-139

S-I-35 This weekend I might stay at my sister's place for three days. I am going to see movies at her house. She has a TV.

T-139

T-R-35 That should be fun! That way you'll get to see Kevin! Is he talking yet? Does he have a name for you?

S-140

S-R-35 No! He is not talking yet. But he is trying to speak. No he does not has a name for me. He just craw to me or try to reach. Sometimes I can't do my homework. He tries to eat my paper or tring to ripe it.

Here, the topic focus is changed to a favorite subject of Gloria's, her nephew Kevin. Second language researchers have suggested that one strategy that native speakers use in their conversations with nonnative speakers is to bring up topics that are salient to the nonnative speaker (Long, 1983a). The teacher here brings up salient topics within a larger topic framework. Since most topic chains are student-initiated, it seems intuitively an effective strategy to get students to respond to their "own" topic [illegible]y refocusing what is being written about to something that is part of the history of the discourse and that has proved to produce relatively long topic chains.

7. Sometimes the teacher may use the student's statements to respond with a more generalized theme. One such example was given before (p. 143); U Chal's experience with a dead dolphin was put into the more general theme of ecological balance. If a student complains that a classmate did not help him to do something, the teacher may respond with the general theme of "how to ask people for help." Thus, the student's specific experience is placed in a wider context. The following example is from Michael's journal:

S-68

S-I-55 You know at the Burma we have the disco house for tape. Some of holiday and the sign and dance and you know what happen to some of the people and they go like this "Oh! look at him he is danceing. I don't know why the Burma people see the they are kissing so they said oh look what they doing.

T-68

T-R-55 Some countries don't disco dance and some countries don't have people kiss each other when other people can see. We call it a different custom. Every country like Burma and the United States have different customs. Did you see the hostages when they thanked the Algerian men for helping. They shook hands then hugged them on each side of the face. That is their custom.

In this case Michael's specific example of the "disco house" is placed in a general theme of cultural differences, showing that countries have different customs.

8. The teacher may also offer suggestions for activities students plan to undertake or provide a different point of view. She uses this strategy to discuss options for "crazy dress day" with Laura. In the following example it is Laura who brings up the topic.

S-118

S-I-55 I ave no idea about a the costum but all thing about it.

T-118

T-R-55 You think about a costume for crazy dress day! It will be fun. Could you and Leticia dress like twins?

S-119

S-R-55 Yes we are going to dress like twins it will be fun thank you for the idea will find some dresses.

T-119

T-R-55 How about wearing same color pants, blouses, ribbons in your hair—then you'd look like twins.

Note that in T-118 the teacher starts out by repeating part of Laura's move ("You think about a costume. . . ."). This becomes part of the ultimate function of the move: to suggest what to do for "crazy dress day." Many teacher strategies have this "dual" function. The teacher may repeat part of the student's move to "set the context straight," as it were, or as a way of signalling which of the many topics is being referred to. The rest of the move serves a different function—to make a suggestion with regard to that topic, for example.

9. The final strategy I will discuss is the teacher's use of evaluations. Evaluative remarks by the teacher can refer to the dialogue journal interaction itself, as when she remarks to Kemmy, "Kemmy wrote a lot," or to Laura, "You did not write to me! I am sad." She may also make evaluative remarks about the student's behavior in class or about the student's academic achievement. The following example is from Michael's journal:

S-85

S-I-34 You know what I like spelling Bee. You know today Spelling Bee is little bit easy.

T-85

T-R-34 You did very well on practice spelling bee. Yes! I could tell you were having fun!

S-R-34 I know Mrs. Reed I know how spelling on the Unint 15 and 16 and you call the hard book so I can't spell and I got out.

The categories of strategies I have presented here will be used to code all of the "local strategies" found in the three sample periods of the journals. In the next section I will discuss a method for determining how effective these strategies are in promoting the sustenance of the interaction in the journals.

Effectiveness of teacher strategies

When we set out to measure the effectiveness of the teacher strategies described above, we assume that teacher strategies influence both the presence or absence of a responding move by the student and its length and complexity. First, concerning the premise that teacher strategies influence the presence or absence of student responses, I have mentioned earlier that the nature of dialogue journal interaction is such that topics may be initiated without becoming mutual. As Greene (1983) found for second through fourth grade students using a school-based postal system, it is not unusual for students to exchange letters without actually interacting. She suggests that it takes experience for writers to learn to control the longer, more complicated turns that are a feature of topic continuation in letters. One of the indicators of the effectiveness of teacher strategies, then, should be the effectiveness of the strategy in eliciting a response at all.

Concerning the length and complexity of the student's responding utterance, Berdan and Garcia (1982) show that among other variables, the previous utterance by a teacher has a definite effect on the language complexity of students' utterances as measured by the Mean

Length of Utterance (MLU). Thus, in the dialogue journal interaction the characteristics of the student response itself must be scrutinized. Do students elaborate more in moves contiguous to certain teacher strategies than to others? What is the syntactic complexity of the student's responding move? What are the cohesive properties of the responding move? Answers to each of these questions seem to indicate a different level of effectiveness of the strategies.

The procedure I suggest to measure the effectiveness of teacher strategies is a four-step method that should provide the desired answers. Figure 4.3 presents a schematic overview of the procedure. The goal of the four-step method is to provide information on the relative effectiveness of the various local teacher strategies with regard to: 1) frequency of student response; 2) degree of elaboration in student response; 3) complexity and length of student response; and 4) number of cohesive ties in student moves. Each of these measures will place the nine teacher strategies I have identified in a rank order for effectiveness. Rank-order correlations among the four measures will indicate whether the measures used result in similar rank orders, thus indicating a strong association among the various linguistic units upon which the strategies exert an influence. As a first step I will simply award points to each teacher move that elicits a response. I will add to that score the total number of other moves in the same teacher entry and weigh for those that also elicit a response. The weighted score will be applied on the assumption that when there are several topics to be attended to at a time, a strategy needs more power to elicit a response than when there is only one topic to be attended to. This scoring procedure gives an overall rating to each strategy based solely on whether or not the strategy elicits a response, without

LINGUISTIC UNIT		MEASURE
INTERACTION	-	RESPONSE RATING
DISCOURSE	-	ELABORATION MEASURE
SYNTAX	-	SYNTACTIC COMPLEXITY MEASURE
SEMANTICS	-	COHESION MEASURE

Figure 4.3. Four-step method for measuring effectiveness of teacher strategies.

considering details of quality of the response.

The second step in the measuring procedure will be a categorization of students' responding moves in terms of the relative presence or absence of elaboration. This is measured by the addition of specific details. This procedure, which is based on Staton's (1982) measurement of topic elaboration in dialogue journals, will yield an elaboration score for each strategy that will allow a determination of a rank order of strategies in terms of their effectiveness in eliciting elaborated student responses.

Without entering into the ongoing controversy concerning the validity and usefulness of T-Unit analysis as a measure of language development (cf. Gaies, 1980), I suggest that greater syntactic complexity indicates to a certain extent the further development of a topic. Since I am interested in determining development of topics as a function of teacher strategies, the third step in the procedure discussed here is to use a T-Unit analysis to examine the syntactic complexity of students' responding moves. Determining T-Unit lengths for responding moves contiguous to the various teacher strategies will indicate a rank order of effectiveness of these strategies to elicit more complex language.

The final step in the measuring procedure is to determine the cohesiveness of students' responding moves. Since teacher strategies are aimed at promoting interaction and avoiding communication trouble, they should be found to elicit cohesive texts. Halliday and Hasan (1976) point out that it is cohesion that enables the reader to interpret the text. By determining the number of cohesive ties in students' responding moves contiguous to the various teacher strategies, another rank order of effectiveness of teacher strategies will be obtained.

Conclusions

At this point no conclusions can be drawn with regard to the effectiveness of various teacher strategies in these dialogue journal samples. It should be pointed out here that the results which will ultimately be achieved from the proposed procedure should not be considered as a program of effective communicative behavior for teachers who use dialogue journals. Teacher strategies and their results are part of the larger context of the topic chain. That is, such things as student characteristics, shared background activities, the level of English of the student moves and the other variables indicated in the topic chain (Fig. 4.1) all influence what the teacher will write at a certain point. Also, these background variables influence the degree to which teacher strategies are effective in eliciting student responses. From the standpoint of communication effectiveness, it seems reasonable to suggest that it is the number of various strategies a participant in an interactive situation has to choose from that will ultimately determine communicative success.

I suggest here that certain strategies will be more effective with certain students than others. However, the overall context in which the communication occurs will determine the degree of effectiveness of certain strategies. Thus, although Mrs. Reed may be an effective writer of dialogue journals, her strategies for achieving her goals should not be copied mindlessly in another context. Participants in any interactive situation generally try out various strategies until they find those that are most effective in achieving their communicative goals.

CHAPTER FIVE

DIALOGUE JOURNALS AS A MEANS OF ENABLING WRITTEN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Jana Staton

Introduction

How can we make it possible for all children to learn to read and write naturally and with full power—to the point of imaginative participation in reading, active expression of their own ideas in writing, and use of writing as a means for further learning? Most of our concern in education is with "teaching" children to read and write. We can, in fact, teach the physical uses and discourse forms of written language (stories, essays, etc.), but the process is painful and protracted for many, taking as long as five or six years. Does it have to be this way?

This chapter begins with an examination of the possibility that learning to read and write can be a process much like the natural, functional, interactive process of oral language acquisition as it occurs between parent and child in non-school settings. The practice of students and teachers conducting written conversations in a "dialogue journal" is one existing practice which resembles in many ways the process of first language acquisition. Thus, the input that the teacher provides in the dialogue journal resembles the input provided by the caretaker of the first language learner. In raising the question of what optimal approaches to written language acquisition would be like, I especially want to address the issue of what prevents practices like the dialogue journal from being a natural part of every child's first experiences with literacy.

The analytical section explores the evidence for asserting that written interpersonal dialogues can fulfill the requirements for optimal input in the process of "subconscious language acquisiton" (Krashen, 1982). The analysis describes the teacher's written input to different students who vary in language proficiency, in order to determine if in fact these beginning learners of English are actually getting "optimal input" through the written dialogue.

The final section reviews some of the problems and issues raised by current literacy practices, and summarizes the argument that reading and writing can be naturally acquired by students, in both first and second language settings, in the process of meaningful communication.

Starting over in thinking about learning to read and write

What would be the best approach for introducing young children or second language learners to written language use in a way that would lead readily to communicative competence? That is the central question I want to pose. In doing so, I am not concerned with how to make marginal improvements in current approaches to learning to read and write (usually text-book based approaches in large class settings), but am asking what the process should look like if we started over. There is one extant, highly successful language learning practice created by human culture to which we can turn as a model, and that is the way in which infants learn to speak (or sign) their native language through interaction with competent adults or older children. Even though there are important cultural variations on this process, the basic process is the same.[1] This process involves functional interaction within a social context which gives meaning to the linguistic code, in which there is a sufficient quantity of clear, comprehensible input, and in which there are numerous opportunities for gradual approximation of appropriate utterances.

Dialogue journals can create the same kind of functional, interactive written conversations in which students can pursue topics of interest. In the first study of dialogue journal writing, Roger Shuy suggested that dialogue journals provide a natural transition from the child's oral competence in using a first language into competence in written language (Shuy, 1982). He pointed out that the dialogue journal writing allows beginning writers to use the wide range of language functions which they have already mastered in spoken language, whereas essays, letters and other types of school writing do not. In such meaningful written conversations, students are socialized into the true, functional uses of reading and writing. The dialogue creates optimal conditions for acquiring competence in both reading and writing much more quickly, easily, and with less time spent in directed instruction.

Although the analysis in this study draws only on the texts of dialogue journals from the sixth-grade ESL students in Mrs. Reed's class, the impetus for the study began with my recent observations of very young deaf students (five to seven years old) at Kendall Demonstration Elementary School (part of Gallaudet College), with profound hearing loss since birth and without prior competence either in oral language or in sign language (Musick, 1984; Staton, 1984a). At this early level, I have been observing whether the dialogue journals can allow these students to participate in written communication before they "know how" to read and write.

These beginning students first draw pictures, and their teacher writes back and comments on them (a first reading comprehension event, similar to an infant gesturing at an object, and parent supplying the words). Their writing development appears to follow the natural sequence from one-word to two-word stage, until they are finally producing a full syntactic representation of meaning in linguistic form (Staton, 1984a). These young deaf children are "breaking into print" without the extensive oral language competence which hearing children bring to written language. Nevertheless, the process in their dialogue journals follows the same sequence and appears to involve the same kinds of functional interactions in writing which occur in learning a first language, whether orally or visual-gesturally.

If the argument that students could learn to read and write more readily through interactive written conversations, supplemented as needed by one-to-one or large-class instruction, is fundamentally correct, it raises two further questions. First, why aren't interactive written conversations commonly practiced in schools? Second, what evidence exists that such conversations can provide the kind of "optimal input" required for promoting writing development?

Lack of interactive written conversations

Why isn't some kind of interactive written communication already common in schools, if it is as effective as I have claimed? Why are dialogue journals considered so innovative and unique by most teachers? One reason may be that our thinking about how children learn to read and write has rested on an unexamined assumption. Typically, we have assumed that learning to read and write can happen only in school, with formal instruction in a group setting. By contrast, language acquisition requires some kind of one-to-one interaction over extended time, and it does not require specific teaching of forms or knowledge about the language in isolated activities. Language seems to be acquired best when it is done subconsciously, in the process of doing something else. This approach simply doesn't fit into our existing schema of what schooling is. So educational practices begin with teacher-centered approaches, determining what the adult can do to teach, rather than beginning first with what children might be able to do and only in this context deciding what role the adult should play. I am not arguing for a nativist view of learning to read and write that would assume literacy will "just happen" apart from adults providing help and language input. But I am arguing that the child's learning is the context for any teaching that is needed, rather than the other way around.

A number of researchers have begun to explore how children acquire literacy skills in sociocultural contexts through informal reading and writing events, often with parental support (Anderson & Stokes, 1984; Ferreiro & Teberosky, 1982; Goodman, 1984; Harste, Woodward & Burke, 1983; Jacobs, 1984; Schieffelin & Cochran-Smith, 1984; Smith, 1983). Schieffelin and Cochran-Smith, for example, in reviewing a number of settings in which children acquired literacy early, before formal instruction, found that the one common prerequisite was that these children were exposed to a literacy which was "functional, relevant and meaningful for individuals in the society in which they live" (1984, p. 22).

However, even these studies appear to have missed the direct connection between oral first language acquisition and the acquisition of reading and writing competence. They have not understood that in a literate society, teachers and other adults can readily and spontaneously provide in writing the same kind of optimal input as they do in face-to-face language interactions.

The foregoing argument raises the question of what are the "mechanisms" intrinsic to the dialogue journal, by which children could learn to read and write in interaction, without being taught? First, we have the natural human capacity to construct a language when placed in an environment where that language is being used in meaningful ways. Chomsky (1965) introduced the concept of a "language acquisition device," or LAD, to explain this unique human capacity, and something like it must be posited to explain how an infant constructs the components of a language, out of all the language input available, within the first two years of life. Second, language acquires meaning from the contexts in which it is used. By beginning to read and write about the particular physical and social context, including one's own perceptions and feelings—the authentic human experience which is already understood—most of what is read and written would be comprehensible and meaningful, and new words could be learned in context. The third factor is the need for language input that is clear and comprehensible, both syntactically and at the discourse level, so that both comprehension and production are maximized.

It is this third factor which can be studied directly. The following analysis of the teacher's writing as language input provides evidence that dialogue journal communication, when it is functional, about self-generated topics, and continued over sufficient time, provides an excellent environment for language learning.

Characteristics of language acquisition and input

The argument that dialogue journal interactions with a teacher can actively contribute to and enhance students' language acquisition requires that the teacher's input be clear and comprehensible, and adapted to the individual student's level. This study is a first, empirical look at the written input of the teacher in the dialogue journal interaction to see how closely it matches the kind of input available to second language learners in face-to-face interaction.

The current research on language acquisition, in first or second language settings, has focused on the nature of the "input" received by the language learner from competent native speakers. This research has been stimulated by the continuing evidence that persons, whether infants or adults, when placed in language immersion situations where they interact frequently and meaningfully with native speakers, seem to acquire language rather naturally to reach a level of communicative competence which includes both sociolinguistic and linguistic mastery. In contrast, language learning in school settings does not seem to produce the same kind of mastery. What is it about the language which learners are exposed to by other speakers when interactions are functional and meaningful, either directly involving the learner or observed closely by the learner as they occur with others, that contributes to this mastery? The "input" hypothesis advocated by Krashen (1982), Hatch(1978a), Long (1980) and others in the second language learning field, and by child language researchers studying the talk of children and caretakers (Snow & Goldfield, 1981; Wanner & Gleitman, 1982), states that the structure of the interaction and the characteristics of the language input contribute in major ways to the "subconscious acquisition" of the language. While input and interactional features cannot account entirely for human language learning, as Shatz (1982) points out, there is growing empirical evidence that adults with infants and native speakers (NS) with nonnative speakers (NNS) adapt their language in highly systematic ways which facilitate comprehension of the language and create many opportunities for meaningful interaction by the learner (Long, 1983).

The dialogue journal process by its very nature has the potential for providing the "set of requirements that should be met by any activity or set of materials aimed at subconscious language acquisition" (Krashen, 1982, pp. 62-76). As described by Krashen, these requirements for "optimal input" are that it is:

1) Comprehensible to the learner.
2) Interesting and/or relevant to the learner.
3) Not grammatically sequenced according to some pre-established plan; grammatical structures emerge in the course of the interaction, and in response to the learner's particular language ability.
4) Potentially sufficient in quantity, to match the learner's particular needs and competence at any particular time.
5) Provides opportunities for clarification and for more input on a given topic.
6) Does not put the learner on the defensive; the interaction occurs in a non-threatening, supportive medium which is not "public" and in which "failure" is not noted or punished.

The question now becomes whether the specific features of the teacher's input in the dialogue journal communication are similar to those identified as characterizing optimal input in language acquisition settings, and whether the journals allow the opportunity for a teacher to provide clear, comprehensible input in the target language, as well as opportunities for effective participation by the student. If the whole dialogue journal process is observably like a language acquisition encounter, is the actual written input to the student therefore like the input which seems to characterize both NS-NNS and first language interaction? Part of the interest in this study is in examining the written input of a teacher who is competent in using dialogue journals, but who is not trained in second language teaching nor cognizant of the characteristics of language input which have been found to be most helpful to language learners.[2]

The research on first language acquisition describes the language of the adult language user in adult-child interactions in terms of three categories of features. First, there are the general characteristics of dialogue which are shared with most other face-to-face conversations which center around self-generated, functional topics. Hatch (1978) has pointed out that learning a language evolves out of learning to carry on a good conversation, rather than the reverse. Following this principle, the competent speaker's input will be constrained to those topics which are mutually relevant—the competent speaker does not bring up and hold forth on topics which the other person knows nothing about and cannot contribute to. The input is also constrained by the need to allow for equal turns, and to allow frequent openings for the other person. At the same time, the input represents a rich variety of talk—rich in language functions and not oversimplified in complexity. Generally, input designed for language acquisition adheres closely to

Grice's (1975) maxims for conversational cooperation: not over or under-informative (quantity); relevant to the other speaker's topics (quality); sincere, and nonambiguous (manner).

The second category includes characteristics of the structure of the dialogue which have been found to typify language acquisition interaction, and which differ systematically from adult-adult conversations or conversations between native speakers. Among these characteristics are that turns tend to be shorter in length, there are more questions in proportion to declarative statements, more use of lexical substitution for unfamiliar words, there is more overt marking of new topics (by intonation, lexical statements, pauses, etc.), and significantly more repetition of one's own and the learner's statements to ensure comprehension for both participants (cf. Long, 1980, for a summary of these interactionally determined features).

Third are the specific characteristics of the language addressed to the child, usually called input, which involve variations in linguistic forms at the sentence or intrasentential level to make the input more comprehensible. These include: a greater proportion of present-tense verbs; greater use of Yes-No over Wh-questions; shorter length of utterances; less complex syntax (fewer passives, embedded clauses, or negatives); a higher ratio of content words (nouns, verbs) to function words (conjunctions, prepositions, articles, etc.); and vocabulary substitution.[3]

In summary, the process of first language acquisition is so remarkably successful that it has been accepted as an automatic feature of human life. The recent research on first and second language acquisition has shown that the features of conversations between caretakers and first language learners and between native and nonnative speakers in second language acquisition share a set of characteristics which greatly facilitate the acquisition of language. What has been lacking in even the best formal approaches to teaching reading and writing is a means of functional immersion in written communication, which would replicate the conditions for optimal language acquisition, and bring about the same kind of competence in using the written forms of language as most speakers gain in using oral language (or visual-gestural sign language, in the case of deaf children).

The next part of the paper presents a method for analyzing written dialogue text to determine if the features of clear, comprehensible input are present, and describes the results of applying the method to samples of the teacher's dialogue text.

Analysis of language input in dialogue journal text

It seems intuitively right to claim that interactive, continuous writing about self-generated topics creates the same set of optimal characteristics for language acquisition as do first language interactions. But what evidence is there that the written dialogues actually (1) provide clear, comprehensible input, and (2) expand and elaborate on the learner's comments in interactive response, to accomplish meaning and to demonstrate how the target language does so? How well does dialogue journal writing match the linguistic characteristics of oral language input in first and second language interactions?

Selection of written input features

After a review of the most recent work in the field of first and second language acquisition, I selected the following set of features for analysis. The features are listed first in terms of those which are more intrasentential in nature; second, those which are interactively determined by the student's contribution to the discourse; and third, those which are characteristic of the discourse at the broadest level. The features are stated in terms of research findings concerning conversations with first or second language learners, as compared to conversations between adults or native speakers.

Input features

1. Tense: more present tense verbs than past or future, fewer or no "complex" tenses such as past perfect.
2. Length of utterances: shorter utterances (using T-unit measure).
3. Syntactical complexity is adjusted to be slightly above that of the learner; specifically, one finds
   - few or no passives
   - fewer embedded clauses
   - fewer negatives
4. Functional complexity: ratio of content to function words is higher (nouns, verbs, etc. to conjunctions, prepositions, articles).
5. Vocabulary: provision of explanatory context, definition for unusual words by apposition, etc.

Interactional features:

1. Topic change: topics are signalled more overtly in some manner.
2. Topic establishment: separation of topic statement and comment into two utterances.
3. Turn-taking: shorter turns, more equal in length to learner units.
4. Questions: more questions relative to declarative statements; more Yes-No or tag-end than Wh-questions.

5. Repetition: more direct repetition of one's own or learner's statements (for clarification).
6. Expansion of learner's "telegraphic" statements, in order to supply missing function words.
7. Use of lexical substitution (rewording an unclear word or phrase in subsequent statements, using simpler words).

Quite clearly, many of these features will necessarily co-occur. The attempt to establish the topic in a separate statement before making a comment which adds new information will lead to shorter utterances, which in turn will have fewer conjunctions and will therefore be less complex on measures of sentence complexity. Such changes will also contribute to a higher ratio of "content" to "function" words. However, in beginning this analysis it was not known which of these features may actually vary in the teacher's writing, and so each has been analyzed separately.

As pointed out earlier in this paper, there are also some features of adult-learner language acquisition discourse which are not different from features in adult-adult or native speaker-native speaker discourse. These are intrinsic features of cooperative, mutual conversations, but ones which are often not present in classroom interactions or in beginning written materials. Of the features identified as general characteristics of good mutually comprehensible adult conversations, those which seemed possible to observe and count in the text include four:

Features of good conversation

1. Rich variety of language functions (speech acts);
2. Relevant comments directly connected to the other person's topic;
3. Comments built on shared presuppositions and available context;
4. Frequent openings for the learner to have a turn.

Text sample

To test out methods for analyzing the dialogue journal texts to see if these features would vary depending on the linguistic level of the student, I chose two students from the sample of six who are the focus of the rest of this report: "U Chal," who was the most proficient in English usage (of these six) and "Su Kyong," who was among the least proficient. If the dialogue journal is an optimal language acquisition event, then we should find systematic differences in the teacher's written input to these two students (who, it should be remembered were both among the least English proficient in the class.)

To provide a broader basis for the analysis I included two samples of the same teacher's writing to two more proficient English users, in similar informal written conversations. (1) samples of the teacher's writing in the form of personal letters to me during the period 1981-1983, discussing her teaching and other events in her life, and (2) the dialogue journal text of her writing to the most mature and most English proficient student in this same sixth grade 1980-81 class, Janny. The addition of these latter two samples allowed comparisons of the teacher's linguistic characteristics and discourse style across four recipient audiences which varied in English proficiency:

1) minimal English-proficient learner, sixth grade: Su Kyong
2) more advanced English-proficient learner, sixth grade: U Chal
3) proficient user of English as a second language, sixth grade: Janny
4) adult native English speaker, personal friend: Jana

Although the proficient ESL student, "Janny," is also a second language learner, her written and spoken competence is such that the teacher did not perceive her as an English language "learner" (Mrs. Reed, personal interview). I thus assumed that the teacher would be likely to write to Janny as she would to a native English user. There should be a greater similarity between the teacher's input in this journal and the adult personal letters, and greater differences between her input to Janny and to either U Chal or Su Kyong. One test of dialogue journals as an environment for language acquisition therefore would be found in the comparison of the teacher's writing to U Chal and to Su Kyong: Can this written form of communication allow for fine discriminations between two students who are similar in English proficiency?

The use of this small but representative sample of texts allowed time for a careful consideration of how to count the occurrence of the features in such a way that relevant comparisons could be made across texts which differ in format, content, and length. The data analysis was conducted to demonstrate how such analyses might be undertaken and to explore initial hypotheses, rather than to attempt an exhaustive statistical study.

The samples of text from Su Kyong and U Chal were taken from their journals in February, about mid-year. The criterion for selection was a two-week exchange in which both participants seemed fully involved, generating ten entries for each student and the teacher, but the length of the entries, of course, varied. Selecting from February entires assured that the teacher would have sufficient exposure to each student's writing to have made an assessment of their language level. The sample from Janny's journal came from early March and is only one week long, but the total amount of writing is close to that of the other two students. The two letters were each a full page of typewritten prose, each about 400 words in length (only one is enclosed).

In considering the results of the analysis, one must keep in mind that no examples of the teacher's writing to a proficient, adult audience were available in the dialogue journal format. Letters are naturally monologues; because of the time and space separations, personal letters will have fewer "performatives"; i.e., speech acts which directly act on or request action from a reader. Comparisons between the language features in the teacher's letters and in the journal texts can be only rough indications of her natural competency at varying input.

However, the personal letters are written in an informal register, and do approximate the style we would expect her to use in a dialogue journal exchange with an adult proficient in English. My extensive reading and analysis of adult-level dialogue journals has shown that such journal texts have the same preponderance of reporting functions and elaborations on past experience as do personal letters.

Table 5.1 outlines the parameters of the text samples, which are provided in full in the Appendix to this chapter.

Audience	Entries (N)	Statements (Utterances) (N)	Words (N)	Topics (N)
To: Su Kyong	10	46	336	22
To: U Chal	10	59	535	27
To: Janny	5	46	550	16
To: Jana	2 letters	60	790	10
	(1981)		(430)	(6)
	(1983)		(360)	(4)

Table 5.1. Description of teacher texts used for comparative analysis.

Data analysis

1. Linguistic input features

The first set of features to be analyzed were the linguistic features of the teacher's input. Table 5.2 on the following page presents the result of that analysis, comparing the teacher's input to Su Kyong, to U Chal, to Janny, and to Jana. In most cases, the base for determining frequency of occurrence is the total number of written statements or sentences for the two-week period. In some cases, the number of paragraphs or number of entries is used as the base.

Both the variations which Table 5.2 reveals and the lack of variations or even lack of any occurrence of some features are instructive in adding to our understanding of how these written conversations function as language learning opportunities.

Tense. The first feature, use of more present tense relative to past tense verbs, does not vary markedly in the teacher's writing to any of these three students, but does contrast with her writing to an adult colleague, where the contrast in tense use is marked.

Ex: Su Kyong: My had is hord little
Mrs. Reed: I hope your head does not hurt.

Ex: Mrs. Reed: While we were in England we (just) had to go to Harrods, the largest department store . . . .

With Su Kyong, the teacher stays in the present tense, even though the headache is a day old by now and could have been referred to in the past tense. In the letter to Jana, the narrative function leads to establishing relationships in the past.

	Audience (in order of increasing English proficiency)			
Input Feature	Su Kyong	U Chal	Janny	Jana
1. Ratio of present to past tense verbs (based on number of sentences)	52%:28%	61%:22%	56%:26%	32%:66%
2. Utterance Length:				
- Teacher T-unit measure	7.3	9.07	10.5	16.6
(Child T-unit)	(6.8)	(10.74)	(14.8)	N/A
- Teacher/child t-unit ratio:	1.07:1	.844:1	.71:1	
3. Syntactical complexity: (based on % of all sentences containing:)				
- passive constructions	0	0	0	3%
- embedded clauses	19%	19%	25%	60%
- negatives	13%	0	7%	15%
4. Ratio of content words to function words	67:33	56:44	49:51	46:54
5. Vocabulary: definitions and explanations (# of instances)	0	1	0	0

Table 5.2. Differences in linguistic input in the teacher's writing to audiences varying in level of English proficiency.

This lack of variation in the teacher's writing to the students may indicate that the dialogue journal, in the way the teacher uses it as a context-embedded form of daily writing, itself constrains the occurrence of references to complicated time relationships in the past or future, or to conditional states. This, of course, would make the dialogue journal a more effective initial language learning encounter.

Utterance length. Typical of all input to new learners is a somewhat shorter length of utterances than would be typical of adult-adult or NS-NS discourse. The teacher's adaptations to her students' levels of comprehension are quite systematic. With Su Kyong, her average length of utterance (using the T-Unit measure to determine independent statements) is 7.3. With U Chal it definitely increases, to 9.07, and with Janny it increases again to 10.5. All of these are much below her adult-level discourse style of 16.6 words per sentence. If we contrast the teacher's mean length of utterance to that of each student's, we find that she matches Su Kyong almost exactly (7.3 to 6.8). With U Chal and Janny, she is writing slightly less lengthy utterances than the students, but for each, the average length of her utterances does increase systematically with the student's proficiency in English.

Syntactic complexity. A more specific way of looking at the complexity of the teacher's writing is to look at the frequency of occurrence of several features which generally contribute to linguistic complexity: passives, embedded clauses, and negatives. The teacher avoids passives in writing to all three students; only in her letter to an adult do one or two passive constructions come into use. With embedded clauses, there is more systematic differentiation between students: for both Su Kyong and U Chal, she has about the same number (19% of all statements (T-Units) have an embedded clause). For Janny, it is slightly higher (25%), and for an adult reader, her natural discourse style places embedded clauses in 60% of all statements. The pattern of variation is not clear in the use of negatives. Their occurrence, given our small sample of text, seems determined not by the teacher's adaptation to the student's level of proficiency, but by the specific topics and language functions being accomplished. (For example, with Su Kyong the teacher is suggesting alternative actions the student could take, and this results in more negatives.) In general, the teacher uses negatives infrequently with all readers.

Content/function words. The next feature is the ratio of content to function words. For content words, I counted all nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives, and pronouns used as subjects or objects. All other words, including auxiliary verbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and articles were categorized as function words. This analysis shows the degree of fine-tuning of input which the teacher accomplishes: with Su Kyong, there are almost twice as many content words as function words, as these examples demonstrate:

Mrs. Reed: I like to go to Japanese Town, too. Did you eat there?

Mrs. Reed: You are using some good words in spelling. Do you study at home?

The ratio decreases to about 5 to 4 for U Chal, is about even for Janny, and to an adult the number of function words is greater than the number of content words, as shown by these examples:

To U Chal: Yes! I can see why you might be confused reading words in clusters. You are learning the English language and the reading at the same time.

To Janny: Being a winner always puts you in the position of being a target for anyone who feels insecure or inferior.

To Jana: It may be interesting to see how often and under what conditions the self-disclosure takes place, if indeed it does.

Definitions/explanations. The last feature is the use of definitions and explanations of particular words, which is very common in oral language. Only one instance of this feature was found in the first samples and it seems to occur rarely in the teacher's writing although there is nothing to prevent a teacher from using it.

2. Interaction features

The second set of features to be analyzed are those which relate to the structure of the interaction. Because of the interactional nature of these features, they do not occur in the more monologue-style discourse of a letter, even a personal letter. For these features, Janny's journal provides the relevant contrast with Su Kyong's and U Chal's, since we do not have any samples of the teacher's input to an adult in the dialogue journal format. Table 5.3 presents the results of the analysis, comparing the teacher's input to Su Kyong, U Chal, and Janny.

Topic marking. The first feature studied was the marking of topics. In written form, there are conventions such as paragraphing which can provide overt topic marking. In the dialogue journals the

	Audience (in order of increasing proficiency⟶)		
Interactional Features	Su Kyong	U Chal	Janny
1. Overt topic marking			
-topic defined in first sentence of paragraph	20/20	27/27	11/16
-topic order matches student's topic order	90%	50%	20%
2. Decomposition of topic and comment into two sentences, as percent of total number	50%	7%	0
3. Average length of turns (# of utterances) Teacher: Student	4.6/5.6	5.8/4.4	9.2/13
4. Questions as percent of all statements	17%	17%	4%
5. Yes-no or tag questions as percent of all questions	89%	80%	100%
6. Confirmation/clarification (as % of all statements)			
-in question form	0	0	0
-direct repetition of student statement	26%	7%	0
7. Use of lexical substitution in subsequent entries	0	0	0
8. Expansion of student's writing to supply missing function words (instances observed)	3	0	0

Table 5.3. Differences in interactional features of the teacher's writing to audiences varying in English language proficiency.

teacher separates all of her topics with paragraphing, even when the paragraph only has two sentences, as in the following response to Su Kyong:

> Mrs. Reed: Thank you! I would like to be like your Aunty!
>
> What is the bear's name? Do you think he needs a new name?

Two other aspects of topic marking were studied to determine: if the teacher was making an additional effort to ensure that her topics were stated clearly in the first sentence of the paragraph; and whether the topic order of her response matched the order in which the student introduced those topics. In her writing to U Chal and Su Kyong, she never fails to state the topic of the paragraph in her first sentence, as Table 5.3 shows. With Janny, however, it appears that she is not making the same careful adaptations in her discourse. Only 11 out of 16 paragraphs begin with the topic clearly stated in the first sentence. In the others, the teacher begins by referring to the student's topic only inferentially as in the example below, which is a comment on Janny's entry describing her difficulty with other students when she won the spelling bee:

> Mrs. Reed: It is difficult to understand—and I understand and share your weird feeling! Do cry if you feel like it! You are human, your feelings are hurt and you are not at fault. It is very disturbing. It is most difficult to be a good loser!

In dialogue journals, where the student may bring up several topics in one entry for the teacher to respond to, the order of the teacher's response may contribute greatly to the comprehensibility of her writing. Therefore, I also matched the topic order of each student entry with the order of the teacher's response. In Su Kyong's journal, the order of topics matched in 9 of 10 exchanges or 90%; in U Chal's journal, the topics matched in order in 5 of 10 exchanges (50%). With Janny, we can surmise that the teacher is no longer conscious of the need to be careful about the order in which she responds to topics. Only once in five exchanges does the order of topics match. What this means is that the teacher is providing the least proficient students with input which is sequenced exactly to match their writing. If they are not sure about a topic in her response, they can look back at their own entry and count down. Observations of the classroom have shown that students often re-read their own entry in order to understand hers. By adhering to the same topic order, she is providing the kind of comprehensible input which language learners need.

Topic decomposing. Even more interesting is the teacher's tendency to "decompose" her initial statements into two sentences, one stating just the topic, and the next offering a comment or elaboration on that topic. Long (1980) first pointed out how characteristic this is of native speaker-nonnative speaker discourse. With Su Kyong, 50% of all of the teacher's topics occur in a two-sentence pattern which serves the dual purpose of seeking confirmation that this is the right topic, and "establishing" the topic so that the student knows she has been understood:

> Su Kyong: today yestoday I dedt Jernel but today I raylt
> Jenel I can rayt Jenel bycus I can rayt.
>
> Mrs. Reed: Yes, yesterday you didn't turn in your journal.
> I am glad today you are writing in your
> journal. (S & T-36)

With U Chal, she feels the need to signal the topic in an independent sentence much less often (7%), and with Janny the topic is referred to as a "given," in the same sentence as her elaborated comment.

Mrs. Reed to Janny: Those 3 boys do that to show off.

Length of turns. Language learners need many opportunities to have a turn, and it is incumbent on the competent speaker to provide those opportunities by shortening their turns. With the dialogue journal, equality of turn-taking is ensured, but a teacher could nonetheless write a great deal more in her responses than her students do, in effect making them read and comprehend a lot of text before they could start writing in response. An analysis of the length of turns measured by number of sentences in a turn in these three journals shows a complex pattern. With Su Kyong, she manages to write slightly fewer sentences, on the average, than the student does (4.6 for the teacher, to 5.6 sentences for the student). With U Chal, her responses are slightly longer, 5.8 sentences to his 4.4. In fact, she tends to write 2 to 6 sentences per entry more than he does. One may assume that she is responding to his greater command of English and greater involvement in academic topics to "stretch" his comprehension by elaborating more. With Janny, who is writing rather lengthy entries, the teacher's are generally shorter in comparison. This pattern is typical of her responses to good students who are very elaborative. Since she reponds to 30 journals each evening, she cannot match the more fluent students in length or she would never get done.

Questions. The teacher varies her questions, both in the form of the question and in the frequency with which she uses them.[4] To both Su Kyong and U Chal, 17% of her utterances are questions, while to Janny, only 4% of her utterances involve a direct question. This indicates that she is using questions more overtly to maintain engagement and check on comprehension with the less proficient English user. However, the proportion of questions to declarative statements is far less than the proportion of questions generally occurring in classroom interactions between teacher and student. While a slightly higher proportion of questions is good for new learners of a language, a preponderance of questions does not facilitate comprehension, and in fact can be quite intimidating. It should be pointed out that this teacher in her dialogue journal discourse does not make the mistake of asking several questions in a row about different topics. Her questions are spaced and integrated into acknowledgements and elaborations on the student's topics (cf. Kreeft's chapter on teacher questions, this volume, for a more detailed analysis of the style and functions of the teacher's questions.)

The second variation in question use is the proportion of wh- to yes/no or tag-end questions. With young language learners, competent speakers use a much higher proportion of yes/no and tag-end questions, thereby aiding the less competent speaker in framing a reply by reducing the complexity of an open-ended response (Shuy, 1981b). The teacher's input in the dialogue journals clearly reflects this adaptation. With Su Kyong, she frames all but one question as a yes/no or tag-end question, as in this example:

Mrs. Reed: I am afraid of tigers, are you?

With U Chal as well, all but two questions are stated in a yes/no format, even when the way to elicit more conversation would be to use a wh- question:

Mrs. Reed: Today we learned 3 ways to read better.
Do you use any of those ways? ("Which
way do you use?")

With both students she avoids "what," "where," "why" questions. With Janny, there are two questions in the sample, both in yes/no form. There are none in the letter to Jana. One would assume the teacher would use more cognitively demanding question forms with Janny, because Janny uses them in her writing,[5] but wh- questions do not occur in the text sample.

Confirmation/clarification. Another marked feature of conversations with language learners is the high frequency of repetitions which serve to request clarification of or to confirm meaning. In the dialogue journal samples analyzed, the teacher does not explicitly ask for clarification of a student's statement, nor does she restate her own utterances. (The permanent visual record of the dialogue allows the student to reread the teacher's response as often as necessary, and if need be, to ask her or another student for help with a word or phrase. The written nature of the dialogue journal thus contains its own built-in "repeating" feature.) However, the teacher frequently repeats a phrase from what the student has written as a means of establishing that she has understood what the student meant. This would allow the student to respond with a correction if the teacher's understanding is wrong.

> Su Kyong: sunday i go japanyes town so clan day got so lal thing
>
> Mrs. Reed: I like to go to Japanese Town, too. Did you eat there?

One fourth or 26% of all the teacher's statements (sentences) to Su Kyong involve this kind of restatement (which also contributes to the topic decomposition score noted above). With U Chal, the number of direct repetitions is much lower (7%), and with Janny, there are none.

Lexical substitution and expansion to supply missing function words are the last two features studied. Neither occurs frequently in the teacher's writing with these students. She does not use words unfamiliar to the students which would have to be clarified by lexical substitution in subsequent entires, although this may have occurred more frequently at the beginning of the year. Again, the students have the option of asking about unfamiliar words in class or looking them up in dictionaries, and they may do so, eliminating the need for the teacher to provide clarification in the journal itself.

Expansion of the student's statement to supply missing function words or morphemes is a very common feature of first language adult-child discourse. Missing articles, prepositions, and auxiliary forms are added by the adult in the expanded utterances. However, in the dialogue journals only with Su Kyong are there instances of the teacher supplying missing functors.

Su Kyong	*Teacher*
Sunday I go Japanyes town	I like to go *to* Japanese town, too
Yesterday I dedt Journal	Yes, you *didn't* *turn in* *your* journal.
Dog jump the jomplo	It would take *a* dog a long time to learn to jump *a* jump rope, wouldn't it?

(Underlining mine.)

3. *Conversational features*

The teacher's texts were also analyzed to determine the presence of the third set of features characteristic of good language input: features common to all good, mutually satisfying conversations. Table 5.4 presents the descriptive findings concerning the four features chosen for analysis: variation in language functions (speech acts), relevance

	Su Kyong	U Chal	Janny	Jana
1. Variation in language functions: (No. of different functions)	12	11	13	7
2. Comments relevant to student topics (as % of all topics)	68% 15/22	78% 21/27	88% 14/16	20% 2/10
3. New topics referring to shared events or context (as % of all topics)	100% 7/7	100% 6/6	100% 2/2	38% 3/8
4. Turn opportunity (teacher turns less than or equal to student's)	10/10	9/10	5/5	n/a

Table 5.4. Conversational features of the teacher's writing to audiences differing in English language proficiency.

of comments to the student's topics, use of shared context in introducing new topics, and frequent opportunities for the other person to take a turn.

This set of features shows a different pattern overall than the other features of the teacher's writing. There is relatively little variation among the three students, and all show very high occurrence of the features in contrast to the teacher's letters, which have fewer language functions, less relevance, to the other writer's topics, few references to shared social/physical context, and are long monologues (as good letters should be). We might think of these features as means to accomplish some of Grice's maxims for conversational cooperation (quantity and quality) and as a means of ensuring that the comments are basically meaningful to the reader by referring to known physical/social contexts.

Variety of language functions. Good mutually satisfying conversations are rich in their language uses, or "language functions" (sometimes referred to as speech acts). As a thorough study of language functions in both the student and teacher writing was done by Shuy (this volume) for the six students studied in this report, I used his data for Su Kyong and U Chal and conducted the same analysis of language functions for the texts written to Janny and Jana. In all three journals the teacher uses a wide variety of language functions: she reports personal facts, reports general facts, gives opinions, requests information, requests opinions, requests that students clarify their text, thanks, evaluates, predicts, gives directives, and offers sympathy. By contrast, in her letters (which certainly are richly elaborated), there is less variation in purposes and therefore functions: the teacher's letters consist of much reporting of personal and general facts, predictions, evaluations, reporting opinions, promising, and expressing wishes ("I do hope I can pass on some of my enjoyment of journals!").

Relevant comments. The second feature characteristic of good conversations is that speakers generally make their comments relevant to the other speaker's topics. When the teacher's topics were examined, a high percentage of her topics were comments on the student's topics: 68 percent to 88 percent. Again, the dialogue journal format enables this conversational feature while the letter writing format constrains it. Letters generally provide new information, rather than comments on information already stated. Only one-fifth of the teacher's topics in the two letters directly reference topics brought up (by phone or letter) by the other person.

Reliance on shared context. Not all comments in a good conversation focus on prior topics; new topics are introduced from time to time in such a way that the other person can understand what is being said. What makes face-to-face conversations meaningful and comprehensible is that there is a high reliance on the shared social/physical context to provide meaning to the utterances. While this reliance on shared context is very marked in the conversations of caretakers and young children, it is a feature that characterizes all good dialogues. All topics introduced into the dialogue as new topics by the teacher were identified and analyzed. In the dialogue texts, none of her topics referenced an event or experience which did not happen during the day in the classroom, or which was not part of the child's own prior experience.

Again, the letters stand in marked contrast; they are more decontextualized and introduce some topics about which the reader does not have prior knowledge (thus requiring more elaborated descriptions). About 5 of the 8 topics introduced in the two letters are on new subjects.

Frequent opportunities for a turn. The fourth characteristic, that both participants get frequent opportunities for a turn, at first seems just an intrinsic and automatic part of the dialogue journal practice. But as was pointed out in the analysis of turn length, a teacher could easily write much more than the students and require them to read a long entry before getting a turn to respond. We know that one of the basic rules adhered to by this teacher is to write "about as much" as the student writes. An examination of the relative length of teacher and student turns (using number of sentences in each as a unit) shows that she seldom writes appreciably more than these students. Only once, in responding to U Chal, does she write twice as much as a student writes. The students, in dialogue with Mrs. Reed at least, enjoy responses which provide new information and demonstrate how to use the language and yet which give them an equal turn to express themselves. Since the required length of student turns is short (two or three sentences are suggested) and the student has control over the time required to complete it, being given frequent turns does not increase the pressure on the student to produce in a way that would cause anxiety.

There are certainly other features of good conversations represented in the dialogue journals which I have not analyzed. This brief set of features represents some of those which contribute to the comprehensibility of the writing and yet provide variety and interest for the learner.

Conclusions

This analysis has sought to discover whether the teacher varies her input to students to match their levels of language proficiency. Comparisons of her input to three students and between the students and an adult colleague show that she varies 14 of the features studied.

The teacher varies relatively little the linguistic features at the intrasentential level in responding to the differences among her students. With these features, the dividing line in terms of adaptation to level of proficiency of the audience seems to be between (any) child and an adult audience. In contrast, she does vary more of the interactional features studied when writing to the different levels of ability represented by Su Kyong, U Chal, and Janny (6 of the 8 interactional features studied differ in her writing to Su Kyong and U Chal). It may be that these interactional features are more under her conscious control, particularly the feature of topic decomposition, which generates variation in other interactional and input features examined. At the syntactic level, she may feel intuitively that there is little variability available for further modification.

Long (1983), in reviewing second language acquisition research, suggests that modifications in the interactional structure of NS/NNS conversations are more important than are phonological modifications for making the conversation flow and become more comprehensible. These data show that the teacher is actually making more systematic modifications in the interactional structure than in linguistic input to affect comprehension.

This analysis was intended simply to show that the systematic variation in occurrence of features in the teacher's writing correlates rather precisely with the variations in her audience's degree of English language proficiency. Given this systematic variation across a number of features, how can we account for it? Like first language interactions between child and caretaker, these written interactions demonstrate the same natural, nonconscious adaptations in language input, away from the complexity and extended interferencing found in adult-adult and NS-NS interactions toward clear, more explicit language. From all that we know about this teacher, we can assume that these particular adaptations are not consciously intended or even known by her as she writes. But there is also evidence that they occur as a result of her conscious intent to make her language comprehensible.

It would appear that the same kind of innate communicative competence which enables speakers to adapt their language to the communicative needs of infants, or to nonnative speakers in "foreigner talk" (Ferguson, 1975) is available to adults in interactive written conversations. If there is a need to posit an innate Language Acquisition Device in young humans, then there is an equal need to posit a corresponding Language Input Device (or program) in adults which generates (upon contact with a language learner) appropriate language simplification using as a model the language first heard from adults in infancy.

What a teacher who wishes to communicate effectively with language learners must do is to communicate very frequently with each learner, in response to the concerns and ideas of that learner, rather than follow a predetermined sequence of grammatical structures and rules. The basic argument of this chapter is that the teacher's natural language input in response to a language learner can be "optimal" for that learner at the moment in time. The advice for the teacher then is the same as that given by Roger Brown, when asked what advice he would give to parents about "teaching" their child to speak:

> Believe that your child can understand more than he or she can say, and seek, above all, to communicate. . . . There is not set of rules of how to talk to a child that can even approach what you unconsciously know. If you concentrate on communicating, everything else will follow. (Brown, 1977, p. 26).

Theories of reading and writing acquisition which we currently use are based on the fairly limited experience and research data of the last 50 years—limited in contrast with the long experience of human culture in teaching language. Our theories of reading and writing contain an unexamined assumption that children must be taught to do these activities in a formal school setting, and so have looked only at what children learn to do, under instruction. Instructional practices based on these recent explorations may result in only marginal improvements in students' skills and are unlikely to lead to a deep love of and competence in using written language among learners, despite increasing "time on task".

This paper suggests that a better theoretical foundation for initial literacy lies in creating a context, an interactional process as similar as possible to the first language acquisition event. The dialogue journals provide a glimpse of what a natural, interactive written language acquisition process would be like. The analysis moves beyond observation and speculation to demonstrate that the teacher's input can and does vary markedly across a number of linguistic and interactional features, such that the hypothesis that the journals make possible clear, comprehensible input at an $\underline{i + 1}$ level is supported. This perspective is opposite to the school-based one: it looks at children learning to read and write first, and only in that context discusses what role adults and instructional approaches could play. The child's learning is seen as the context for any teaching that is needed, rather than the other way around. This perspective does not argue for having children "learn to read and write" completely apart from adults providing help and language input, but it does seek to describe the most natural and effective relationship between children learning to read and write and the activities of adults helping them to do so.

The dialogue journals provide a basis for questioning and redefining the appropriate role of direct instruction in learning to read and write. The dialogue journals create and record a picture of children using written language within which instruction occurs. What "has to be taught" to a child already using written language and receiving daily, sufficient input in that language about events and topics which he or she understands, may be entirely different in context, in sequence, and in timing than what has to be taught to a child who does not use written language. When literacy was the monopoly of the schools, and was used seldom by men and women, or by children in any functional social interactions, it made sense to provide direct, extensive instruction in this rather unnatural form of the language, particularly writing. Now that literacy is not only pervasive in our culture (Scribner and Cole, 1981) and the tools of literacy (including computers) are in homes as well as schools, we need to reexamine the assumptions about how and when literacy can be acquired, and seek the kinds of activities which will facilitate acquisition of written language with as much joy, power, and competence as a child acquires a first language.

Notes to Chapter Five

[1] As Ochs and Schieffelin (1983) have recently pointed out, in South Pacific island cultures language input is provided through multiparty conversations involving other children and caretakers (in which the older child's utterances are often the linguistic model), rather than in direct parent-child interaction and dialogue.

[2] At the time of writing to the three students selected for this analysis (February, 1981) the teacher, Mrs. Reed, had taught for only six months in a school where all students were ESL students. Her previous years of teaching were in a school serving mostly native English speakers, she has received no special training in second language teaching, nor has she had any other experience teaching overseas or teaching other second language learners. She has studied Spanish, as have most teachers in California, in order to be minimally proficient in that language. She thus brought to this class and to the dialogue journals only her own natural language competence and experience in teaching her own children to speak, along with many years of experience in adapting her written responses to the varied reading and cognitive levels of students.

[3] Long (1984) suggests that researchers differentiate between modifications in the *input* and in the structure of the *interaction*, and this distinction has been followed in the analysis conducted here.

[4] In the research on language acquisition, the use of questions vs. declarative statements (or imperatives) has been considered a matter of syntactic form, or "linguistic input" while the form of questions, Wh- vs. Yes/No, has been considered to be part of the interactional pattern. For ease of discussion, I have chosen to discuss both the frequency and form of questions as part of the interactional features.

[5] Also Kreeft in her chapter on the teacher's questions (this volume), found that with native Enlgish speaking students, the teacher uses a much higher proportion of Wh- questions than she does with nonnative English speaking students.

Appendix: Dialogue journal and letter texts

1. Text of Su Kyong's dialogue journal 191

2. Text of U Chal's dialogue journal 194

3. Text of Janny's dialogue journal 198

4. Texts of two letters from Leslee Reed to Jana Staton 202

1. Text of Su Kyong's dialogue journal

(February 2 - February 24, 1980)

(Feb. 2)
S-34 today I come sckool raening pikyul so naeyse sunday I go japanyes town so clan day got so lal thing Im doing big thlay town plas pepll is dong by thly peple I going chlch ably sunday so peple to like go to the chlch I like see the amarca amare today I can do not thing I don wat can I do my had is sik math tame I like the story wath room I can reed I have to stay in the rom I like go to my room. My had is hord little nax to wag we are 5 days dot com to shool I want to go to the home some times I hayto sk Im little skall and

T-34 I am glad you are back. I missed you so much.

I like to go to Japanese Town, too. Did you eat there?

I hope your head does not hurt. I miss you. At noon I had a meeting and I could not let boys and girls come in. You can come in on Tuesday noon.

(Feb. 3)
S-35 today I see the jernol I like you you are naes techer you are rokes like my aney my antey is Korea shes to nayse today I reed small bear hes little bear he thik hes name I think he dot like hes name

T-35 Thank you! I would like to be like your Aunty!

What is the bear's name? Do you think he needs a new name?

Do you remember when you came I called you Kwang Shu? That is my grandson's Korean name. Your name is a little bit like his!

(Feb. 5)
S-36 today yestoday I dedt Jernel but today I raylt Jenel I can rayt Jenel bycus I can rayt

T-36 Yes, yesterday you didn't turn in your journal. I am glad today you are writing in your journal.

You are using some good words in spelling. Do you study at home?

Su Kyong, continued.

(Feb. 6)
S-37 today I cee the journal I wot wied Journal thes time I going to hom I lose my Journal and my pencil box than I so mad and mis reed fort tings no I nat plit the dusch

T-37 Yes, you were feeling bad because you couldn't find your journal. Now you will put your journal in your box every day!

(Feb. 10)
S-38 sunday and satheday sunday raning and monday is raning but today is not raning but sum is come may beis battr

T-38 Yes, it feels good to have the sun shine again!

I missed your journal yesterday.

I like your Valentine sack.

(Feb. 11)
S-39 today lunch time I bling my lunch than leticia got cacap I titlnad and she go here is your cacap tan I got mad I hay her.

T-39 That was not nice. When you bring your lunch don't sit by Leticia. You could eat your lunch in the room. We had stamp club today. You could eat with us.

Thank you for the Valentine! It was very pretty.

(Feb. 17)
S-40 monday we go to the circus this so fan I see the lion they sckle me and they have elepon and so play woman dansing and horse is dansing sofan and dog jump the jomplo so fan

T-40 The circus is fun! I am afraid of lions, too. I am afraid of tigers, are you? Dancing ladies make every circus show pretty. I would be afraid to dance around those big elephants. Would you? It would take a dog a long time to learn to jump a jump rope wouldn't it?

(Feb. 18)
S-41 today Im doing the pe I nabor cach the boll.

T-41 There were several people who never caught the ball. Another day you will catch the ball.

(Feb. 23)
S-42 today I looke the jernol is doly if I do the now jernol and if this jernol is doly my har is not clyn if I do the my now jernol I dont wont doly jernol and today moning sandra is mad me oumus shes borsday I have to got the pljons is her borsday

Su Kyong, continued.

T-42 Can you make a big, big birthday card for Sandra's birthday? She would like that.

I see your word study list in your journal. I am happy you are studying it.

If you keep writing you will get a new journal.

(Feb. 24) today Spelling Bee I fligt the I so I no the spelling
S-43

T-43 Yes! The spelling bee was very hard. I can see why you would be frightened!

2. Text of U Chal's dialogue journal

(February 2 - February 23, 1980)

(Feb. 2) S-82 I saw some other film of Brazil in German and U.S.

I don't know what is valetiens?

I can't do the report, I don't know how to start the report?

T-82 Valentines Day is when people buy or make heart shaped cards to give to each other. We will make a Valentine in class.

In language we talked about how to make a report. The first thing you need to do is to decide on what your report will be on. It should be on some form of ocean life. Then you begin finding books and information on the subject.

(Feb. 3) S-83 Can we do more than one ocean life?

What test is the test we going to do tomorrow?

T-83 Yes, you may do more than one report. Do you like making reports? What is your report going to be on?

You were right! A turtle is a reptile! Thank you for telling me!

The test is called CTBS test. It will help me to know what you need to learn before you go to junior high.

(Feb. 4) S-84 Yes, like to make reports if fun to make and at the same time we learn more about life in the ocean.

I am doing the report about White Sharks then when I finish I am going to do about Dophins if I have time.

In Brazil they only use Celsius they have Fahrenheit but they use Celsius to see the temperature to cook and the doctors use only Celsius to see the body temperature.

T-84 You know Celsius better than Fahrenheit temperatures then, don't you? We are going to be doing some thermometer reading here in the room. We'll use both scales.

Dolphins or porpoises are unique mammals. They seem to have a language.

U Chal, continued.

(Feb. 5) S-85 I never read about Fahrenheit until I come to U.S., the first time I come I saw a film of doctor and they find that 1 monkey had a fever and when he got the fever his body temperature was 115° F but I thoughth they was talking about 115°C but now I know the different of Celsuis and Fahrenheit.

I know and I read that scientist was stunding about dolphins language. Last year when I was in Brazil I was in the beach and I saw a dophin dead on the sand and when I touch the skin is like sofet and then when I eat the lunch and I go to see the dolphin some birds was eating the dolphin.

T-85 The dolphins have even been trained to do undersea work for the Navy. They seem to have an intelligence. The birds help to clean the beach by eating the dead animals. The dolphin's skin has no scales—we expect an animal that looks like a fish to have scales.

Do you like doing reports? Our class seems to be deeply involved.

Have you had a chance to talk to Mrs. P-?

(Feb. 6) S-86 I liked to do the reports is best than do the report in a paper. No. I didn't talk with Mrs. Povey, I cant talk with her at the recess or lunch.

T-86 I'm glad you found your journal!

Mrs. Povey will be back on Tuesday and you can talk to her then.

Our Valentines are pretty--did you like making them?

(Feb. 9) S-87 I am glad too to found, I put under the notebook on the math class and a forgote to bring but I thinked that I put in the box.

I liked to make Valentines even that took me a lot of time.

Are we going to come to school only 3 day?

T-87 We will have 5 days off from school. Thursday is Lincoln's birthday. Friday is just a day off. Saturday and Sunday are regular holidays off. Monday is a holiday in honor of George Washington's Birthday. (He was our first President.)

You thought you put your journal in the box, but Simon thought you left it in Math class.

U Chal, continued.

(Feb. 10) S-88 No, Simon said that he saw me puting the journal in the box but Jun An asked me if I take to Math and I said yes and we when to see on the Math class and I found the journal.

T-88 Now you know what Valentines Day is all about. Did they have Valentines Day in Brazil?

They celebrate Carnival in Brazil. I saw that in the movie I saw about Brazil.

Today we learned 3 ways to read better. Do you use any of those ways?

(Feb. 11) S-89 I think in Brazil they have Valentine but I never celebrat Valentine.

In Brazil the Carnival start Feb. on the first Monday and finish three days later. The biggest Carnival is in Rio de Janeiro.

I used the way to read fast, reading 3 words at the time when I start I was confuse reading three at time.

Have a happy Valentines and a good vacation.

T-89 Where did you live in Brazil? Did you ever see the Carnival parade or were you in the parade?

Yes, I can see why you might be confused reading words in clusters. You are learning the English language and the reading at the same time. You are really doing well. It just takes time to learn so much.

Thank you for the cute valentine. I really like it.

Have a fine holiday--all five days of it!

(Feb. 19) S-90 I live in Sao Paulo and they have Carnival in Sao Paulo but I only saw the Carnival live 1 time then I start to see the Carnival at the television.
Can I made long arms and legs for my creatures?

T-90 Oh, yes! Do make long arms and legs on your creature if you want to! It should be fun to do. We'll work on them again next week.

Yes, watching Carnival on TV would be safer and easier.

U Chal, continued.

(Feb. 23) How many prizes we can win?
S-91

Can I finish the Social Studies work on other day?

I am giving to you the paper my father sign because I was sick.

T-91 Thank you very much for putting the note about being sick in your journal.

Yes! We'll work on our social studies on Tuesday then we'll finish it for homework this week.

I'm sure you can win as many prizes as you can! Soon we'll find out how much you must sell to get prizes.

3. Text of Janny's dialogue journal

(March 2 - March 10, 1980)

(March 2)
S-100

When all of the skirts of are cut each girl will have to sew their own skirts. We have a basketball game that we're supposed to go to in two weeks so we're doing all we can to hurry up.

Yes, I will stop worrying when I find out who is on the Spelling bee team. I want to find out as soon as I can. I am looking forward to it so much. It is a good idea to have our Spelling bee on Friday because then you will have the whole weekend to think about what happened over the week.

Yes, I did go roller-skating. It really as fun. I simply had a wonderful time skating. A lot of my friends went skating too. They played music to entertain us. We had a period when the boys had to skate a period when only the girls were skating, a period when you had to skate in couples, and a period when you had to skate backwards. I kind of wish that I could be here next year when they are going to have the skate again.

Yes, my brother did have an accident. It wasn't a big thing but it got around fast anyways. He knocked his head on the cement and broke one of the bones in his head. He had an operation, got some stitches and stayed in the hospital for a week.

T-100

Your poor brother! I do hope he is fully recovered very soon.

I can say for sure you will be on the Room 11 spelling team! You and Jenny for sure; the other 3 places are not 100% yet.

If you enjoy skating so much do tell the after school coach. He can schedule another skate day. It did seem that everyone was having a great time.

I liked your suggestions about shadowing our letters. Let's try it to see how it looks.

A number of people made some good sales of peanuts or trail mix!

Janny, continued.

(March 3) S-101 Am I really in the Spelling Bee? It is such wonderful news. I came in this morning feeling pretty low but that bit of news simply made my day maybe even the whole week!

Jesus, Benny, and Antonio were cheating at recess. They throw the ball hard so everybody gets out. Everybody said that there wasn't anything in the game so it would be fair!

T-101 Those 3 boys do that to show off. It is best to walk off and leave them because what they want most is an audience.

Selecting you and Jenny was easy. Now selecting the other 3 is tough!

(March 4) S-102 I kind of wished that I was a fifth grader and was in the Spelling Bee. I am so excited, I can't wait until Friday. I wonder who will win but whoever they are I wish them good luck. The Spelling bees that we've had were terrific. I really like it when it's hard.

Now I don't have that much homework anymore. It makes everything a lot easier.

T-102 It is good that you aren't involved in so many things. Have you looked up a famous black American? There are some very interesting people to learn about!

You should love our Thurs. Bee! We'll be using the very hardest words.

I thought it would rain today for sure. Now I feel sure it will rain tonight! We may even have rainy-day session on Thursday.

(March 5) S-103 I sure hope that Ms. C- is in a good mood. I don't like it when she yells. Besides I have a feeling that many people didn't do their homework. Ms. C- was in a good mood after all. She gave us a fair amount of work and since we were quiet she let us listen to some soft classical music. It was a good start to what I hope will be a terrific day.

When we were at reading the people in the auditiorium were yelling and screaming so the show must be very good. I sure hope it is.

Janny, continued.

Yesterday Lena and I plus her sister and brother had a very unfortunate time. I walked home with Jaunita and Lena yesterday and when we crossed the street to Jaunita's house we saw a green car. All of a sudden Jaunita said the green car was following us. Lena and I didn't believe her at first. But we saw the car so many times that I realized he was following us. I told Lena that and we started running home. We were really scared. Still we got home safe and sound. We didn't see him again and I am so glad.

I really liked the I.C.A.P. performance. It was simply wonderful. It was terrific. I really hope they come again!

T-103 Having someone in a car follow you is frightening. Did you happen to get the license number? It would be wise to immediately call the police station, describe the car and tell them the license number and that they had followed you. They can radio a squad car to move into the area and possibly save some other people from being frightened.

I am so glad that the 3 of you were walking together. There is protection in numbers.

Yes, the I.C.A.P. program was great fun and very enjoyable. Our whole class seemed to like it. Now you understand why we were hearing so much noise from the auditorium.

Good luck to you on our big spelling bee!

(March 6)
S-104 I feel wierd. I don't know why. I don't really want to compete on April 29. I think I've had enough of spelling bees no matter how exciting they've been. I wonder if I can win?

The film I saw taught me a lot about menstruation. Now I know the answers to a couple of questions that I've had in my mind.

Do you know someone named Melba Giraldo? Well you gave me the word "beginner" and I spelled it correctly so I won. Well Melba says that you just gave me the word because you wanted to. I know that's not true because I saw you pick out the word from the basket.

It's too bad that Lena lost her pencilcase. I just don't understand why she took the whole thing and not just a pen or a pencil?

Janny, continued.

S-104, cont'd. I wish that I didn't win the Spelling Bee. I know I should be happy about winning but I feel worse than I ever did. I don't care if I cry too much or what but I have to anyway. I feel very much as if the whole world is against me. Even what I thought were my best of friends. The people I trusted now hate me. Why can't they understand?

T-104 It is difficult to understand--and I understand and share your weird feelings! Do cry if you feel like it! You are human, your feelings are hurt and you are not at fault. It is very disturbing. It is most difficult to be a good loser! Somehow being a loser you feel better if you can criticize or "tear down" the winner. The act of destroying the winner makes a poor loser feel better. Being a winner always puts you in the position of being a target for anyone who feels insecure or inferior.

You must try to win in April! I have great confidence in you--as do all of the other teachers here at Alexandria! You may not win, you may win, I don't know which. I do know you will do your very best to do honor to yourself and to your school. You are too fine a person to do otherwise!

I've read and answered most of the journals of our class already this evening. Almost all have been proud of you and angry that others were being mean.

Any help I can give you I will be happy to do so!

(March 10) S-105 I am feeling much better about the Spelling Bee. Now I can easily forget all the bad things about it and remember the good things about it.

Yesterday we heard a funny joke. Miss G- asked all of us what does the white house and McDonalds have in common? The answer is because both of them have a clown in them named Ronald. It was very funny. Anyway it was only a riddle but I respect the president very much.

I liked the listening game we played. It was really fun. I got a lot wrong because I didn't understand it but now I know how to do it.

4. Excerpts of letters to Jana Station from Leslee Reed

June 24, 1981

Dear Jana,

As of today the box of copied journals, work folders, autobiographical sketches, assorted abandoned journals and some data are on their way to you. Gail may want a copy of the S.E.S. sheets that I did, but she is in England right now, so I will check with her later to see about that. The bilingual profile sheets are fairly well scribbled on—you may need translation.

With the final promotion ceremony I sent our class on. They looked so terrific!! Tony and Augustine arrived wearing beige, 3-piece suits and smiles a mile wide!! The girls wore high heels, stiff soles, nylon pantyhouse and nervous giggles!! Such teetering and giggling you cannot imagine! We had all 190 lined up inside of the building and they walked out to their seats on the playground to the Theme from "STARWARS". As soon as they came down the stairs and began the walk across the grounds, the giggles left, but not the teetering on high heels!! They sang well, spoke out well, and seemed to enjoy their part in the ceremony. Not all children were represented by parents, even though we deliberately set the hour at 4:30 so more family members could share the experience with them. Michael's family did not come; so afterward I took him home and though we could only nod and smile, I met his Mother, his Auntie and his Grandmother. How far removed they are from Michael's world! Mother and Grandmother wore the long wrapped skirt.

They each filled out an address card so we may get together this summer at the library. I will either call or write them and plan to set up a date in July and in August. I will check to see how much of the "grasslands info" we can retrieve.

Had a call from Ruth Mitchell about talking to her class. We've set up a date for July 8 and I will use some of the projections we used at San Antonio. She seems basically interested in presenting a new and vital way for teachers to incorporate writing into their programs. I do hope I can pass on some of my enjoyment of journals!! (Though this last year I felt at times the journals suffered because of my exhaustion)!

Ernie thought the idea of coming East next summer might be fun. So we will see how well I can do at UCLA and then possibly we can work out something. I have no fears if you are there—but on my own I am not that sure!!

Really enjoyed Roger's work on "Learning To Talk Like the Teacher." It certainly makes me pause and think about the teachereze we use. I've heard children imitate me, and am always stunned by how much I talk or how negative I must sound. It is almost a comfort to realize they only imitate me when they are attempting to be Mrs. Reed!!

October 23, 1983

Dear Jana,

Haven't written nor called for so long it seemed time to clear that matter up right away by getting down to the typewriter and bringing up to date all of the happenings around here.

While we were in England we had to go to Harrods, the largest department store in the country and rather famous. We decided to have lunch there and in a rather crowded area we joined the crowds, qued up and had our turn finally to be seated. Our table was not large, but the place was crowded and a lovely lady asked if she might join us. Our conversation was pleasant and we discovered she, too, was in education and suddenly we were chatting away as though we had known each other for years---such a brilliant woman and such a joy to talk to over a pleasant English lunch. Somehow it came out that she knew Roger Shuy and asked how I knew him, and so again we found a common bond! Her name is _____ of Bryn Mawr College!

After arriving home and getting back to school our school was shocked to find that our current Assistant Principal had been "bumped" by another Assistant Principal. We were sorry to have the change and our Assistant Principal decided to retire rather than take a new assignment. Our new Assistant Principal came in and within a short time she was telling me that she had traveled and demonstrated and sold Ginn Reading Books. When I told her that Roger was a friend of ours she practically went into a dance! She knows you well and wants to be remembered to you. Dr. ______ apparently worked with you several years ago. She has had a difficult job to fill, the former Assistant was so well liked and was so different in manner that Dr. _______ has felt a bit left out, I'm afraid.

One of the language aides assigned to my class for 3 thirty-minute periods a week (to assist the Vietnamese, Thai and Laotian students) is a Psych. Major at UCLA. She became interested in the Dialogue Journals and now wants to do a research project using the current season of journals. Her proposal "Self-disclosure in Preteenagers as a Function of Teacher's Use of Social Power base in Teacher-Student Dialogue Journals." is loaded with educational jargon, but sounds interesting. It may be interesting to see how often and under what conditions the self-disclosure takes place, if indeed it does. Anyway it is a new function to be studied.

CHAPTER SIX

THE FUNCTION OF LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS IN THE DIALOGUE JOURNAL INTERACTIONS OF NONNATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKERS AND THEIR TEACHER

Roger Shuy

Language functions

There are many ways to analyze language. Traditionally, linguists have approached a written or spoken body of data from the perspective of language forms, those visible or audible elements of language that are referred to as sounds, morphemes, words and sentences. A "grammar" of a language is essentially a description of its forms, its basic minimal units. Recently, however, considerable attention has also been given by linguists to the functions of language, the things that get done when the forms are put together in acceptable and effective ways. As yet there is no widespread agreement about how to analyze language functions but important steps have been taken by philosophers such as Searle (1969, 1975, 1979) Austin (1975) and Grice (1975) as well as by linguists such as Saddock (1974) and Levinson (1983). Those who study language functions may refer to their work by several labels including speech acts, pragmatics and functionalism.

Linguistic and psychological approaches to language

It might seem as though functional language analysis moves traditional language study out of linguistics proper toward psychology.

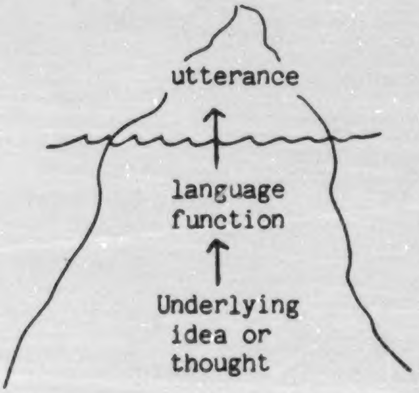
But there are some important differences between the way linguists and psychologists approach language. Traditionally, psychologists note human phenomena primarily so that they can interpret them as evidence of underlying psychological states such as attribution. Such a procedure assumes that the surface behavior phenomena are not the same as the underlying construct. In addition, psychologists traditionally feel that human behavior such as language is so complex that it is not really possible to observe. Partly this is because they are not trained to really observe language and partly it is because the technologies of tape recorders, xerography, etc. are rather recent. Whether from a lack of technology, a lack of linguistic training, or from a natural predisposition to interpret constructs and underlying psychological states, psychology has not really worked directly with the evidence of human language behavior.

Linguists, on the other hand, do not have to posit underlying constructs to analyze language. Nor do linguists value elicited language in the way psychologists do. For the linguist, authentic language (that is, language which occurs normally in real-life contexts where no particular effort is made to elicit it) is primary. Linguists do not feel that language must be elicited through tests or special experiments in order to be able to interpret its structure or meaning. For the linguist, there is an important language ecology principle at work. If a piece of language is extracted by elicitation from its authentic context, linguists feel that the elicitation procedure actually distorts the data. In any case, there would be no real need to extract pieces of language behavior in this way since clues to the intentions of a speaker are residual in the speech and these clues can be described rather than interpreted as evidence of an underlying psychological state.

Another primary difference between the ways linguists and psychologists view language is that linguists analyze in the context of interaction. Whether the language analyzed is spoken conversation (by definition interactive) or written essays (in which an intended audience is accounted for), it is the reality of language used in an authentic, human context that matters. The words or sentences cannot be meaningfully wrenched from some contexts because these contexts provide part of the meaning, part of the clues to intention. For example, courts of law have been known to claim that a person's response of "uh-huh" to another person's statements constitutes agreement with that person. There are, indeed, situations in which "uh-huh" may be construed to mean agreement but there are many more situations and contexts in which "uh-huh" signals nothing more than "I am still here," "I hear what you're saying," "I see what you mean," or even, "Keep talking, I'll hear you out even though I may not agree." Such a meaning is the likely one in a telephone conversation, for example, where the lack of visible feedback requires occasional noise making on the part of the listener in order to assure the speaker of attentiveness or non-failure of the electronic connection. Another example is the meaning of the word, "kill." In a conversation in which the discussion centers on getting rid of an undesirable person, "kill" may well mean, "to make dead". But in the context of a baseball game, "kill the umpire" has no such meaning. In such contexts, "kill" can be taken to mean little more than disagreement or complaint.

Linguists and psychologists alike are interested in the intentions of a speaker. It is their methods of finding these clues that differ drastically. The two fields may have similar goals but quite different beginning points. Psychologists do not see these clues as residing in the language itself. Linguists do. Psychologists detach speech from its natural context by means of tests or experiments. Linguists do not. Psychologists then interpret the test or experimental evidence in terms of underlying psychological states. Linguists find no need to do this since their analyses of the language behavior serve as evidence enough of these psychological states.

Elsewhere I have described language function analysis as existing between actual human language behavior that linguists describe and the underlying psychological states that psychologists study (Shuy, 1982a) as follows:



(spoken or written language forms are uttered)

(the way forms are organized to accomplish goal)

(goals underlying psychological states)

This iceberg model asserts that underlying ideas or thoughts are first conceptualized as language functions (such as reporting facts or opinions, giving directives, complaining, thanking, promising, etc.). These conceptualized functions are then realized as observable behavior (written, spoken or signed, as in American Sign Language). Only the latter are observable and recordable. Linguists have traditionally focused their study of observable speech on the sounds, the morphemes, the lexicon and the syntax. The recent concern for language functions is simply a move toward larger and larger units of analysis. As noted earlier, the question in the minds of some critics of functional language analysis is whether by moving from form to function linguists have not stepped out of linguistics and into psychology. In one sense they have but it is very difficult to make such a claim when psychology has claimed neither the methodology of analyzing language functions nor the existence of the unit of analysis itself. That is, how could linguists be encroaching on psychology's domain if the territory has not yet been explored and the technology for such exploration has not yet been created? A further question has to do with not only the identity of disciplinary boundaries but, more significantly, with the usefulness of such boundaries even if they are discovered. Strict, consistent definitions of linguistics and of psychology have always been difficult to produce. Both fields seem to be involved in all human activity and, as such, their definitions leak.

The structure of language functions in dialogue journals

Whether or not the study of language functions is the accepted domain of linguists, such analysis can be useful in determining an important layer of structure in language use. The functional language analysis of the dialogue journals of the sixth grade bilingual children in this corpus (see Chapter One for a description of the corpus) is no exception. The following is such an analysis. It should be noted here that the six bilingual children in this study constitute the group of least proficient English speakers in their classroom.

Methodology

There is probably no better way to begin an analysis of language functions than to first provide a sample of such an analysis. The following student entry will illustrate.

Student text	Function
Michael S-14	
1. Today I finish my Spelling Sentence and Math.	Reporting Personal Fact
2. Mrs. Goland give math is very easy Mrs. Reed.	Evaluating Reporting General Fact
3. We have everyday P.E. right Mrs. Reed.	Requesting Academic Information
4. I'm not finish my sentence.	Reporting Personal Fact
5. Today I finish the something Mrs. Reed.	Reporting Personal Fact
6. At the lunch time I help the Safety Mrs. Reed, the first grate play the lunch finish so no drink water so I help the Safety and I tel him go to the other water sink.	Reporting Personal Fact

In this journal entry, Michael produced four different language functions in a total of six sentences. In our study of dialogue journal writing of native English speakers (Staton, Shuy, Kreeft, and Reed, 1982) we found many instances of simultaneous, multiple language functions within a sentence. Perhaps because the children in the current sample are not native English speakers, we find few such multiple simultaneous functions. It appears that the task of communicating in a new language constrains the functions to a one-at-a-time sequence.

Language functions in the sample

The procedure followed in determining which language functions were to be selected for analysis is essentially the same one that was used by Shuy (1982a). The teacher-student dialogue journals were selected for analysis. Three two-week sample periods (ten interactions each period) from each journal were selected representing fall, winter and spring writing during the school year. (The sample from each student's journal is described in Appendix II to Chapter One. I analyzed the first ten interactions in each sample period.) Then each sentence was marked for the language functions it contained.

It is recognized that certain language functions are more complex than others. That is, functions such as complaining or apologizing have felicity conditions which may require several sentences in order to complete or attain felicity (Shuy, 1982a). Other functions, such as reporting facts, requesting, reporting opinions, predicting and evaluating, can be accomplished in a sentence or even less than a sentence.

Each sentence in each teacher and student entry was marked and coded for the language function or functions present. Then all functions were tabulated and noted for frequency of occurrence in each of these time periods. It became clear at this point that fourteen language functions recur with sufficient frequency among the subjects to be considered representative of almost all of the functions used in this sample. The list of fourteen functions is as follows:

1. Reporting Personal Facts
2. Reporting General Facts
3. Reporting Opinions
4. Requesting Personal Information
5. Requesting Academic Information
6. Requesting General Information
7. Requesting Opinion
8. Requesting Clarification
9. Thanking
10. Evaluating
11. Predicting
12. Complaining
13. Apologizing
14. Giving Directive

One additional language function, promising, was used by one student only in this sample:

	Total Instances	Number of Students
Promising	[illegible]	1

There were no instances in this sample of the functions of offering, sympathizing, warning or giving advice, all common to oral language used by native speakers.

Definitions of language functions analyzed

The fourteen language functions used by all the subjects in this study are briefly defined as follows:

1. Reporting personal facts. The reporting of facts makes up a large portion of the speech and writing of most individuals. It is useful, however, to categorize two types of fact reporting: reporting personal facts and reporting general facts. Personal facts include events related specifically and personally to the writer. Such facts can be things that happened to the writer or to those immediate to and in some way connected to the writer. Examples include the following:

Andy S-68	Today I am second come to school
U Chal S-136	Saturday and Sunday I went to the Karate
Laura S-103	Mrs. Reed leticia and sondra are mat at me I danth.

2. Reporting general facts. In addition to personal facts, writers in this sample also report many general facts. These are not specific to the writer directly. Rather, they are shared facts and generalizations held by a wider group of people. Examples include the following:

Su Kyong S-30	sunday and sathedary sunday raining and monday is raining but today is not raining but sun is come may flied batter.
Kemmy S-6	we did the book.
U Chal S-84	In Brazil the Carnival start Feb. on the first Monday and finish three days later.

3. Reporting opinions. An opinion is an expression of feeling, preference or evaluation which is not judgeable or verifiable against an external standard or norm. As such, it does not imply positive knowledge. Examples of reporting opinions include the following:

Andy S-68	I like you and Miss V- face.
U Chal S-139	I loved the ICAP program.
Laura S-103	I like when you read the book after lunch in like a relax time.

4. Requesting personal information. A significant amount of human interaction consists of asking questions. Most school-based writing excludes question asking by students since the traditional form of writing, the essay, is not interactive. In dialogue journals, however, many questions are asked by students. As in normal conversation, it is often necessary to request clarification, to request personal information, to request general information and to request opinions.

Requests for personal information are self-explanatory: one writer asks the other for information about him or herself. Examples include:

Laura S-110	Why you dont you wanth to tell us when is your birthey?
Michael S-17	You don't know the Burma Language, right.
U Chal S-10	How many year you live in Los Angeles?

5. Requests for academic information. Dialogue journal

writers in this sample also request information related to classwork. Such requests are of two kinds: facts and procedures. Although these two types could be broken out separately, we have decided to lump them together in this analysis. Examples are as follows:

U Chal S-91	Can I finish the Social Studies work on other day?
Laura S-13	Mrs. Reed can you help me with the times tibols.
Michael S-13	Mrs. Reed, what is a Social Studies.

6. Requesting general information. Requests for general information here refer to requests made by one writer to the other about general facts (see 2 above). Such facts are not personal or specific to the person being asked, nor are they specific to school, classroom or academic knowledge. They refer to general world knowledge. Examples include:

Kemmy S-5	How spelling Name Mrs Vu.
Laura S-103	Wen the other picture are going to come.
U Chal S-81	What is valentiens? (valentines)

7. Requesting opinions. Opinions have been defined in 3 above as expressions of feeling, preference or evaluation not verifiable against an external norm. Requests for opinions are requests for such expressions made by one writer to the other. Examples include:

Michael S-8	Do you like play Baseball Basketball, or Kickball.
Laura S-104	(today we have turkey) do you like it.
Kemmy S-63	do you like sun Mrs. Reed.

8. Requesting clarification. One of the most important language functions for the successful negotiation of schooling is that of learning how to find out what has not been made clear. In oral

language there are many direct and indirect strategies for requesting clarification available to the competent speaker. Nonnatives must learn some of these strategies or face continuing confusion or ignorance. In this sample, there is only instance of a student request for clarification, as follows:

Michael S-76	Mrs. Reed, what are you talking about.

The teacher used this function more frequently, however, as the following illustrate:

To Michael T-9	(I'm not sure your idea is clear). Could you explain it?
To Laura T-104	(Where are your new stamps from?) I can't read that word.
To Su Kyong T-9	I'm not sure what your last sentence says.

9. Thanking. Thanking is an expression of gratitude or appreciation or the acknowledgement for favors, service or courtesy. Examples include:

Andy S-71	(Yesterday I am go to library. You are pickup to me) Thank you.
Laura S-14	Mrs. Reed Thanch you for everything.
Michael S-8	Thank you for tell me "you are very good to help"

10. Evaluating. Evaluating differs from reporting opinions in that opinions, as noted in 3 above, express feelings, preference or evaluation which is not based on or judged against external standards or norms. Evaluations, in contrast, are based on or judged against actual or perceived standards or norms. Although the evidence of such external stan-dards often is not stated, it can be readily inferred. Examples include:

Andy S-70	Yesterday homework is hart (hard)
Laura S-16	Mrs. Reed Italian and English is ruealy good.
Kemmy S-7	Mrs. Reed you are good teacher and Mrs. Vu the good to teacher.

11. Predicting. Predicting is found in statements in which the writer expresses an indication that he or she will do something or plans to do something in the future such as the following:

Andy S-71	Tomorrow my mom come to house.
U Chal S-15	Maybe one day I go to Brazil to visit my friends.
Su Kyong S-72	(Simon is not good) but I think hes gona do and good.

12. Complaining. Complaining involves stating a supposed prejudice against the writer and giving an account of such prejudice. Examples include:

Andy S-72	(Yesterday teacher is I don't like! like! She said "Try.") I know I am try and I don't know teacher teacher said "All try hurry". (I don't like She.)
Laura S-103	I am still in level 6, it is easy for me but you and Mrs. G- donth let me pass.
Michael S-127	You said I was making so much noise right becuse I can't not see and its hot too Mrs. Reed.

13. Apologizing. An apology is an expression of regret for having injured, insulted or wronged another person, specifically the person being apologized to. Examples include:

Andy S-8	I don't know I can speak english. teacher I am sorry.
Laura S-70	I am sorry if I donth write a lot bleause I did not have the time.
Michael S-84	I was wrong and I did not think about what you tell me.

14. Giving directives. By giving directives here we mean

that the writer indicates, directly or indirectly, his or her insistent desire for the reader to bring about the state of affairs expressed by the proposition. As such, directives differ from advice and warnings, in that directives are stated from the perspective of the writer, as in "*I* want you to do this." Advice, on the other hand, is given from the perspective of the reader, as in "If I were *you*, I would do this." With advice, the option is the reader's; with directives, no such option exists. Likewise, with warnings, the writer provides information upon which the reader may be wise to act but, again, with a personal choice or option involved. Directives differ from warnings, again, in that directives offer no option, being from the writer's perspective while warnings are given from the reader's perspective. Directives may also contain warnings, as in, "You do this or I'll give you a low grade." Advice may also contain warnings, "If I were you I'd do this or you'll suffer the consequences." In both above cases, the utterances are marked as containing two functions, directive and warning and advice and warning, respectively.

Because the act of giving directives depends heavily on the status, age, role-relationship, etc. of the interactants, this function is carried out almost entirely by the teacher in our sample. Examples are as follows:

To U Chal T-82 The first thing you need to do is to decide on what your report will be on. It should be on some form of ocean life. Then you begin finding books and information on the subject.

To Andy T-10 Ask a teacher if you don't know.

To Laura T-10 I want you to try to write and talk in English so you will comprehend better. Every day you write and read.

Student uses of language functions

Table 6.1 displays the instances in which each student in this sample used each language function in the three two-week samples of their year-long dialogue journals. Table 6.2 displays the same results but by percentage ratios. There were 1,214 language functions used by the six students during these three time periods. Ranked by frequency of use as a group, the following five functions account for 88.8% of all the instances used by students:

		Instances	Percent
1.	Reporting Personal Facts	372	30.6%
2.	Reporting Opinions	346	28.5%
3.	Reporting General Facts	245	20.1%
4.	Evaluating	61	5.0%
5.	Requesting Personal Information	56	4.6%

The remaining 12.2% of all language functions used by the group as a whole rank as follows:

		Instances	Percent
6.	Requesting Academic Information	29	2.3%
7.	Complaining	28	2.3%
8.	Predicting	25	2.0%
9.	Requesting Opinions	21	1.7%
10.	Apologizing	15	1.2%
11.	Thanking	9	.7%
12.	Requesting General Information	3	.2%
13.	Giving Directives	3	.2%
14.	Requesting Clarification	1	.08%

	Andy	Laura	U Chal	Kemmy	Michael	Su Kyong	Total Group	Percent Group
Report Pers. Fact	80	39	42	21	142	48	372	30.6
Report Gen. Fact	57	21	18	102	24	23	245	20.1
Report Opinion	94	52	14	86	54	46	346	28.5
Request Pers. Info.	9	4	13	10	17	3	56	4.6
Request Acad. Info.	1	7	10	1	10	0	29	2.3
Request Gen. Info.	0	1	1	1	0	0	3	.2
Request Opinion	0	2	0	9	9	1	21	.17
Request Clarif.	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	.08
Thank	4	2	0	1	2	0	9	.07
Evaluate	17	11	1	23	9	0	61	5.0
Predict	16	3	2	1	2	1	25	2.0
Complain	4	4	3	2	11	4	28	2.3
Apologize	7	4	0	1	3	0	15	1.2
Give Directive	0	0	1	0	2	0	3	.2
TOTAL	299	150	95	258	286	126	1214	

Table 6.1. Total number of language functions by student. 6-week sample: fall, winter, spring.

	Andy	Laura	U Chal	Kemmy	Michael	Su Kyong
Report Pers. Fact	26.7%	26.0%	44.2%	8.1%	49.6%	38.0%
Report Gen. Fact	19.0%	14.0%	18.9%	39.5%	8.3%	18.2%
Report Opinion	31.4%	34.6%	14.7%	33.3%	18.8%	36.5%
Request Pers. Info.	3.0%	2.60%	13.6%	3.8%	5.9%	2.3%
Request Acad. Info.	.03%	4.6%	10.5%	.03%	3.4%	0.0
Request Gen. Info.	0.0	.06%	1.0%	.03%	0.0	0.0
Request Opinion	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.4%	3.1%	.07%
Request Clarif.	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	.03%	0.0
Thank	1.3%	0.0	0.0	.03%	.06%	0.0
Evaluate	5.6%	.06%	1.0%	8.9%	3.1%	0.0
Predict	5.3%	1.3%	2.1%	.03%	.06%	.07%
Complain	1.3%	2.6%	3.1%	.07%	3.8%	3.1%
Apologize	2.3%	2.6%	0.0	.03%	1.0%	0.0
Give Directive	0.0	.06%	1.0%	0.0	.06%	0.0

Table 6.2. Percent of language functions by student in relation to all functions used by that student.

When we examine the students' individual frequency of use of those five language functions which constitute majority usage of the group as a whole (4% or more) we note the following comparisons:

1. Reporting personal facts: Group, 30.6%.

Four of the six students use this function most frequently (Andy, U Chal, Michael and Su Kyong). For Laura it is second most frequent but for Kemmy it ranks only fourth.

2. Reporting opinions: Group, 28.5%

Again four of the six use it second most frequently (Andy, Kemmy, Michael and Su Kyong). Laura uses it most frequently and for U Chal it ranks third.

3. Reporting general facts: Group, 20.1%

Four of the students use this function third most frequently (Andy, Laura, Michael and Su Kyong). For Kemmy, it ranks first; for U Chal it is second.

4. Evaluating: Group, 5.0%

Here only Andy matches the group ranking. For Kemmy it ranks third. For U Chal and Michael it is seventh in frequency. Laura's use is miniscule (.006%) and Su Kyong does not evaluate at all.

5. Requesting personal information: Group, 4.6%

Three students (Laura, Kemmy and Su Kyong) match the group frequency. U Chal and Michael use this function fourth most frequently. Andy uses it sixth in frequency.

Table 6.3 displays the comparative frequency rankings of the most frequently used functions, by student (based on percents in Table 6.2). Note that U Chal uses 10 language functions at a rate of 1% or more and Andy and Michael use 9. In contrast, Su Kyong and Kemmy use only 5 and 6, respectively, at a rate of 1% or more. Laura, who began the year knowing less English than any of the others, uses 8 language functions at a frequency of 1% or more, possibly as a result of rapid language acquisition throughout the year.

	Andy	Laura	U Chal	Kemmy	Michael	Su Kyong
Report Pers. Fact	2	2	1	4	1	1
Report Gen. Fact	3	3	2	1	3	3
Report Opinion	1	1	3	2	2	2
Request Pers. Info.	6	5,6,7*	4	5	4	5
Request Acad. Info.		4	5		6	
Request Gen. Info.			7,8,9*			
Request Opinion				6	7,8*	
Request Clarif.						
Thank	8,9*					
Evaluate	4		7,8,9*	3	7,8*	
Predict	5	8				
Complain	8,9*	5,6,7*	6		5	4
Apologize	7	5,6,7*			9	
Give Directive			7,8,9*			
TOTALS	9	8	10	6	9	5

* Tie

Table 6.3. Rank order of frequency of language functions used by individual students accounting for 1% or more of use.

The significance of the different frequency of use of language functions may be suggested by several factors, including English ability, academic ability, psychological adjustment and, perhaps, topic of discussion. Based on test scores, in-class performance and journal entries, U Chal is regarded by the teacher as the most advanced student. Michael and Andy are regarded as next strongest and Laura, Kemmy and Su Kyong are regarded as weakest. As Table 6.3 indicates, the most competent students (U Chal, Andy and Michael) use more language functions

(9 or 10) than do the least competent students (Laura, Kemmy and Su Kyong), who use fewer (5 to 8).

Taking U Chal, Michael and Andy as the most competent English users we note that U Chal's and Michael's rankings of function use are somewhat similar for the top most frequent functions whereas Andy has similar rankings only for the three most frequent functions. Table 6.4 displays the frequency of use ranking of the five most used functions per student, categorized by most and least advanced students.

	Most Advanced Students			Least Advanced Students		
	U Chal	Michael	Andy	Kemmy	Laura	Su Kyong
Report Pers. Fact	1	1	2	4	2	1
Report Gen. Fact	2	3	3	1	3	3
Report Opinion	3	2	1	2	1	2
Request Pers. Info.	4	4		5	5*	5
Request Acad. Info.	5				4	
Evaluate			4	3		
Predict			5			
Complain		5			5*	4
Apologize					5*	

* Tie

Table 6.4 Ranking of frequency of language function use: five most frequently used functions.

Teacher uses of language functions

As a mature person with years of experience teaching and using dialogue journals in her classroom, the teacher in this study might be expected to evidence appropriate and optimum use of language functions.

In that she is writing to different individuals who are at different stages of development, however, one might also expect her use of functions to vary by student and by different stages of development of each student. Staton (1982) has observed that this same teacher, when writing to native English speakers, scaffolds the students by adjusting her language both to their needs and to their levels of development. Therefore, one might expect the teacher's use of language functions with these nonnative English speakers also to vary by student and by stages of student development. Table 6.5 displays the number of language functions used by the teacher when writing to each student. Table 6.6 displays the same results but by percentage ratios.

	To Andy	To Laura	To U Chal	To Kemmy	To Michael	To Su Kyong	Total Group	Percent Group
Report Pers. Fact	11	16	30	6	23	12	98	9.9
Report Gen. Fact	52	28	57	85	64	30	316	32.2
Report Opinion	52	36	25	38	42	34	227	23.1
Request Pers. Info.	18	10	13	10	19	5	75	7.6
Request Acad. Info.	1	1	4	0	3	1	10	1.0
Request Gen. Info.	0	0	1	5	1	2	9	.9
Request Opinion	6	7	8	7	3	5	36	3.6
Request Clarif.	1	2	0	0	4	3	10	1.0
Thank	6	2	4	2	4	2	20	2.0
Evaluate	19	7	9	13	19	1	68	6.9
Predict	9	5	6	6	2	1	29	2.9
Complain	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	.1
Apologize	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	.1
Give Directive	10	29	7	4	20	11	81	8.2
TOTAL	185	145	164	176	204	107	981	

Table 6.5. Total number of language functions by teacher to individual students.

	To Andy	To Laura	To U Chal	To Kemmy	To Michael	To Su Kyong
Report Pers. Fact	5.9%	11.0%	18.2%	3.4%	11.2%	11.2%
Report Gen. Fact	28.1%	19.3%	34.7%	48.2%	31.3%	28.0%
Report Opinion	28.1%	24.8%	15.2%	21.5%	20.5%	31.7%
Request Pers. Info.	9.7%	6.8%	7.9%	5.6%	9.3%	4.5%
Request Acad. Info.	.05%	.06%	2.4%	0.0	1.4%	.09%
Request Gen. Info.	0.0	0.0	.06%	2.8%	.04%	1.8%
Request Opinion	3.2%	4.8%	4.8%	3.9%	1.4%	4.6%
Request Clarif.	.05%	1.3%	0.0	0.0	1.9%	2.8%
Thank	3.2%	1.3%	2.4%	1.1%	1.9%	1.8%
Evaluate	10.2%	4.8%	5.4%	7.3%	9.3%	.09%
Predict	4.8%	3.4%	3.6%	3.4%	.09%	.09%
Complain	0.0	.06%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Apologize	0.0	.06%	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Give Directive	5.4%	20.0%	4.2%	2.2%	9.8%	10.2%

Table 6.6. Percent of language functions used by the teacher to each student in relation to all functions used to that student.

There were 981 language functions used by the teacher to the six students during the three time periods of the sample. Ranked by frequency of use to the entire group, the following five functions account for 81% of all the instances used by the teacher:

	Instances	Percent
1. Reporting Personal Facts	316	32.2
2. Reporting General Facts	227	23.1
3. Reporting Opinions	98	9.9
4. Requesting Personal Information	81	8.2
5. Requesting Academic Information	75	7.6

The remaining 19% of all language functions used by the teacher to all six students together rank as follows:

		Instances	Percent
6.	Requesting General Information	68	6.9
7.	Requesting Opinion	36	3.6
8.	Requesting Clarification	29	2.9
9.	Thanking	20	2.0
10.	Evaluating	10	1.0
11.	Predicting	11	1.0
12.	Complaining	9	.9
13.	Apologizing	1	.01
14.	Giving Directive	1	.01

When we examine the teacher's use of language functions at a ratio of 4% or more (the same criterion used to define major language functions used by the students), we note the following comparisons.

1. Reporting general facts: to Group, 32.2%.

To four of the six students (Andy, U Chal, Kemmy and Michael) the teacher uses this language function most frequently. For Su Kyong it is second most frequent and for Laura third.

2. Reporting opinions: to Group, 23.1%.

To three of the six students (Andy, Laura, and Su Kyong) the teacher uses this function most frequently. To Kemmy and Michael it is second most frequent and to U Chal, third.

3. Reporting personal facts: to Group, 9.9%.

To Michael and Su Kyong this function ranks third most frequent. To U Chal the teacher uses it second most frequently, and to Laura and Andy much less frequently, fourth and fifth respectively.

4. Giving directives: to Group, 8.2%.

To only two of the students, Michael and Su Kyong, did this function match the group norm. To Laura it ranked second, to U Chal seventh and to Kemmy, eighth in frequency.

5. Requesting personal information: to Group, 7.6%.

Although as a group this function ranked fifth, only Laura and

Michael fit the group norm. To Andy, U Chal and Kemmy it ranked fourth, while to Su Kyong it ranked sixth.

One might expect that if a teacher were writing consistently to all children, without taking individual differences into consideration, a measure of such consistency might be found even in such an unconscious feature as the use of language functions. Here, the fact that the teacher's use of language functions varies between individual students and whole group averages suggests strongly that she is carefully adjusting her language to perceived individual differences. In fact, if one were trying to assess a teacher's ability to adjust his or her language to individual differences, one might find no better measure of this than the use of language functions.

Extending the anaylsis of the teacher's variable use of language functions to these children a bit further, Table 6.7 displays the teacher's use of language functions above 4% to all six children:

1. Report General Facts: Group 32.2%

To	Kemmy	48.2%
	U Chal	34.7
	Michael	31.3
	Andy	28.1
	Su Kyong	28.0
	Laura	19.3

2. Report Opinion: Group 23.1%

To	Su Kyong	31.7%
	Andy	28.1
	Laura	24.8
	Kemmy	21.5
	Michael	20.0
	U Chal	15.2

3. Report Personal Facts: Group 9.9%

To	U Chal	18.2%
	Michael	11.2
	Su Kyong	11.2
	Laura	11.0
	Andy	5.9
	Kemmy	3.4

4. Give Directives: Group 8.2%

To	Laura	20.0%
	Su Kyong	10.2
	Michael	9.8
	Andy	5.4
	U Chal	4.2
	Kemmy	2.2

5. Request Personal Information: Group 7.6%

To	Andy	9.7%
	U Chal	7.9
	Laura	6.8
	Kemmy	5.6
	Su Kyong	4.5
	Michael	1.4

6. Evaluate: Group 6.9%

To	Andy	10.2%
	Michael	9.3
	Kemmy	7.3
	U Chal	5.4
	Laura	4.8
	Su Kyong	.09

7. Request Opinions: Group 3.6%

To	Laura	4.8%
	U Chal	4.8
	Su Kyong	4.6
	Kemmy	3.9
	Andy	3.2
	Michael	1.4

Table 6.7. Comparison of group norm for frequent language functions with individual student use ratios. Break indicates above or below group average.

Table 6.7 shows that the seven most frequently used teacher language functions have rather broad ranges of difference across the six students. In order to understand why such differences occur, it is first useful to compare the student's use of each function with that of the teacher. This is done in Table 6.8 on the next page.

Table 6.8. Comparison of student and teacher percentages of language functions used over 4% by one or both participants in any set of exchanges.

	Andy		Laura		U Chai		Kemmy		Michael		Su Kyong	
	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T
1. Report Pers. Fact	26.7	5.9	26.0	11.0	44.2	18.2	8.1	3.4	49.6	11.2	38.0	11.2
2. Report Gen. Fact	19.0	28.1	14.0	19.3	18.9	34.7	39.5	48.2	8.3	31.1	18.2	28.0
3. Report Opin.	31.4	28.1	34.6	24.8	14.7	15.2	33.3	21.5	18.8	20.5	36.5	31.7
4. Request Pers. Information	.03	9.7	2.6	6.8	13.6	7.9	3.8	5.6	5.9	9.3	2.3	4.5
5. Request Acad. Information	.03	.05	4.6	.06	10.5	2.4	.03	0.0	3.4	1.4	0.0	.09
6. Request Opin.	0.0	3.2	0.0	4.8	0.0	4.8	0.0	3.9	.03	1.4	0.0	4.6
7. Evaluate	5.6	20.2	.06	4.8	1.0	5.4	8.9	7.3	3.1	9.3	0.0	.09
8. Predict	5.3	4.8	1.3	3.4	2.1	3.6	.03	3.4	.06	.09	.07	.09
9. Give Directive	0.0	5.4	.06	20.0	1.0	4.2	0.0	2.2	.06	9.8	0.0	10.2

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This comparison reveals general practices used by the teacher, excluding other possible variables such as specific context of the exchange, as follows:

1. Reporting personal facts. The teacher's general practice is to report approximately 50% to 25% as many personal facts as do the students, regardless of the amount used by the student. She reports the most personal facts to one of the two students who report the most personal facts, U Chal (44.2% to 18.2% respectively). Likewise, she reports the fewest personal facts to the student who reports the fewest, Kemmy (8.1% to 3.4% respectively).

2. Reporting general facts. The teacher's general practice is to report approximately 25% to 50% more general facts than do the students. Again she reports the most general facts to the student who reports the most general facts, Kemmy--48.2% to 39.5%, respectively. She "keeps ahead" of Andy, U Chal, Kemmy, and Su Kyong by 10% or more in frequency, scaffolding them "up" in this function. Michael and Laura are interesting aberrations to this pattern. Michael, regarded as a reasonably competent English speaker, produces only 8.3% general facts. The teacher, perhaps to counter his low productivity for this function, patterns 31.3%. Laura, one of the the least competent English speakers, produces 14% general facts and the teacher responds with only 19.3%. In Laura's case, the teacher's strategy for developing communicative competence appears to be getting Laura to give opinions. The teacher both models her own opinions (24.8% of the teacher's functions to Laura are opinions, the most frequent function used to Laura) and she requests Laura's opinion (4.8% of the teacher's functions to Laura are requests for opinions, more than the teacher used with any other student).

3. *Reporting opinions*. The teacher's general practice is to report fewer of her own opinions to students who report opinions at a ratio of more than 30% and to exceed the student's ratio of reporting opinions if the student's ratio is less than 20%. Again, clear expectations and teacher scaffolding are apparent.

4. *Requesting personal information*. The teacher's general practice is to request personal information two to three times more frequently than the student does if the student's ratio of requesting information is under 10%. If the student's ratio is over 10%, the teacher requests personal information less frequently than the student.

5. *Requesting academic information*. Although it might be expected that a teacher would commonly request academic information of a student, this teacher adheres to the main precepts of dialogue journal writing--to develop communicative competence, not to assess the student's school knowledge--and she therefore requests academic information much less than do the students. Only to U Chal and Michael, regarded as more competent English speakers, does the teacher's ratio of requests for academic information exceed even 1% of her total functions (to U Chal it is 2.4% and to Michael, 1.4%).

6. *Requesting opinions*. Perhaps realizing that requesting an opinion is less intimidating than requesting school facts, the teacher requests opinions far more often than do the students. Except to Michael, she requests opinions at a ratio of from 3.2% to 4.8% of her functions. Her ratio to Michael may be so low (1.4%) because her major strategy to him appears to be to get him to report general facts, the one category in which he is very low and a function that she believes he has enough competence to accomplish.

7. Evaluating. The teacher's general practice is to evaluate more than the student does if the student's evaluation ratio is less than 6% of all functions. If the student's ratio of evaluation is over 6%, the teacher evaluates less than the student does.

8. Predicting. As with evaluating, the teacher's general practice is to predict more than the student does if the student's predicting ratio is less than 6% of all functions used. If the student's ratio of predicting is over 6%, the teacher predicts less than the student does.

9. Directives. Directives are a language function which is clearly attached to authority, age and role-relationships. The teacher gives far more directives than do the students. Her ratio to Laura, 20%, still seems inordinately high until we realize that beginning English students, as Laura is, require more direct statements than inferred ones. A teacher can give directives for many reasons such as discipline and procedural matters. For beginners, however, directives have the advantage of clarity and simplicity and need not be attached to negative disciplinary or procedural commands. It is suspected that to Laura and perhaps also to Su Kyong, another beginning level student, the teacher's directives were more gentle language teaching strategies, not disciplinary language.

Comparison of language functions used by nonnative English speakers and native English speakers

An earlier analysis of the language functions used by students and their teacher was reported in Staton, et al., 1982. This report analyzed the language functions of ten children who had lived all their lives in the United States. They wrote back and forth to the same teacher as the one in the current study, in the same city, Los Angeles, at the same grade level.

Table 6.9 is a comparison of the percentage of language functions used by all students sampled in the two studies.

	1982 Native Speakers	1984 Non-Native Speakers
Reporting Personal Facts	31.4%	30.6%
Reporting Opinions	18.3	28.5
Reporting General Facts	17.3	20.1
Evaluating	9.5	5.0
Requesting Personal Information	*	4.6
Requesting Academic Information	*	2.3
Complaing	5.7	2.3
Predicting	9.2	2.0
Requesting Opinion	.5	1.7
Apologizing	1.0	1.2
Thanking	.8	.7
Requesting General Information	*	.2
Giving Directives	.3	.2
Requesting Clarification	*	.08
TOTAL Requesting Functions	4.5	9.4

* Data not analyzed in such a way that these percentages could be recovered.

Table 6.9. Comparison of language functions used by native and non-native English speaking sixth graders.

It should be noted that the manner in which the requesting functions were analyzed differed in the two studies. In 1982, they were analyzed as requesting information, requesting procedures and requesting opinions. In the current study requesting functions were analyzed as requesting personal information, requesting academic information, requesting general information and requesting opinions. Only requesting opinions are specifically comparable in the two studies. Table 6.9, however, also aggregates requesting functions in both studies for a macro-functional comparison. All other functions are specifically comparable.

Of interest is that the four most frequently used functions rank the same across the two studies. Native and nonnative English speaking children produce an almost identical frequency of reporting personal facts (31.4% to 30.6%).

Although reporting opinions ranks second in both studies, the frequency of nonnatives is much higher (28.5% to 18.3%), possibly as a result of the teacher's scaffolding and requests for student opinions.

Native speakers report slightly fewer general facts (17.3% to 20.1% for nonnatives). Natives also evaluate more frequently (9.5% to 4.%), complain more frequently (5.7% to 2.3%) and predict more frequently (9.2% to 2%).

In addition to a higher frequency of reporting opinions and reporting general facts, nonnatives ask over twice as many questions as do natives (9.4% to 4.5%).

Comparison of teacher functions to natives and nonnatives

Table 6.10 on the next page compares the teacher's overall percentage of language function use to native speakers in the 1982 study with the nonnatives in the 1984 study.

Major differences in the frequency of language functions used by the teacher to native speakers as opposed to nonnatives in these samples are evident in virtually every function, the exceptions being the functions of thanking and giving directives, where the frequencies are fairly similar. As was noted earlier, the system of analyzing the functions of requesting differed between the two studies, yielding only one specifically comparable function, requesting opinions. As with

	1982 Study (To Native-Speakers)	1984 Study (To Nonnative Speakers)
Reporting Personal Facts	24.0%	9.9%
Reporting Opinions	8.6	23.1
Reporting General Facts	15.9	32.2
Evaluating	13.4	6.9
Requesting Personal Information	*	7.6
Requesting Academic Information	*	1.0
Complaing	.9	.1
Predicting	6.6	2.9
Requesting Opinion	5.7	3.6
Apologizing	.5	.1
Thanking	1.7	2.0
Requesting General Information	*	.9
Giving Directives	9.8	8.2
Requesting Clarification	*	1.0
TOTAL Requesting Functions	15.2	10.5

* Data not analyzed in such a way that these percentages could be recovered.

Table 6.10. Comparison of language functions used by teacher to native and nonnative English speaking sixth graders.

student language functions, all requesting functions were also aggregated into one total requesting function.

It is clear that the teacher uses all of the observed functions to both groups of students. Differences can be seen, however, in the frequencies with which she employs these language functions. To the native English speakers, for example, the teacher uses 8 of the 10 comparable functions in at least 5% of her writing whereas to the nonnative English speakers she uses only 6 of the 10 comparable language functions in at least 5% of her writing. Strong differences can be observed also in the frequencies with which the teacher employs each language function. The teacher reports general facts over twice as often to nonnatives than to natives and she reports opinions over three times as often to nonnatives than to natives. On the other hand, the teacher reports personal facts almost three times as often to natives than she does to nonnatives. She evaluates almost twice as often to natives than to nonnatives and she requests opinions one-third more to natives than to nonnatives. She predicts over twice as often to natives than to nonnatives and she requests opinions one-third more to natives than to nonnatives. Finally, the teacher's aggregate of questioning functions is one-third more to natives than to nonnatives.

An implicit theory of teaching and learning

What accounts for these differences in frequency of the teacher's language functions to nonnatives as opposed to natives? There is no data base in the research on developing communicative competence that could have guided the teacher in what functions to use in order to limit or accelerate communicative competence or language learning. Obviously she did not read the literature before writing to these students. But even if such a data base existed, it is unlikely that this teacher or any other person engaging in daily communication would be able to manipulate such information consciously and still engage in the communication with ease or naturalness. Just as thinking about one's feet tends to cause one to stumble on stairways, so thinking about one's language tends to cause difficulty when one uses it.

Not only is there no research basis to account for the teacher's different uses of language functions for different groups of students but there are also no pedagogical materials or curricula which would provide her any useful guidance.

We are led to believe, therefore, that the teacher has an implicit theory, whether articulated or not, whether conscious or not, that causes her to effect these dramatic shifts in frequency of language function use. From the data of the two studies compared here it is possible to reconstruct her implicit theory as follows:

1. In order to develop communicative competence, students must have something [illegible] write about. Since their lives have been lived overseas and their background knowledge and culture are not easily assumed, one must begin by providing the "stuff" of communication, general facts as a baseline for further discussion.

Result: Provide nonnatives more general facts than natives will need.

2. Another source of baseline material upon which continuous discussion can be based lies within the participants themselves--their opinions. Opinions are not as intimidating as other information might be and opinions constitute, for foreign students at least, new information. Thus by reporting opinions the teacher can provide nonintimidating new information while, at the same time, laying down a baseline for further discussion, priming the pump for communication.

Result: Report more opinions to nonnatives than to natives.

3. Although natives report personal facts, for many international students such revelations about oneself, one's family or other personal affairs are dangerous, inappropriate or painful. One must go slowly here and let it happen naturally, when it will.

Result: Provide the student fewer reports of one's own personal facts than one might give to natives.

4. Evaluating can be intimidating personally and risky cross-culturally. Although evaluation calls on cognitive skills of taxonomy and comparison, it is better to go slowly at least until the teacher and

student build a degree of mutuality and trust out of which the cognitive benefits can be developed.

Result: Provide fewer evaluations to nonnatives than to natives.

5. Predicting is useful when the knowledge base and assumed conditions are well understood. However, predicting can be counterproductive, if not dangerous, when these factors are not clearly present or understood.

Result: Provide fewer predicting functions to nonnatives than to natives.

These aspects of the teacher's implicit theory of teaching and learning are, of course, totally derived from her practice. It is doubtful that, if asked, she would articulate them in any way closely approximating the above. From this linguistic analysis, however, such a theory is derivable.

One might also ask how the teacher developed such an implicit theory. The answer appears to be in the language event itself. A good conversationalist is taught by the conversation in which he or she participates. One need look no further than the dialogue journals themselves for clues to such knowledge. A good example can be found in Michael's journal during the first week of school in 1980. Michael had arrived in Los Angeles from Burma in January of 1980. His second and third journal entries during the fall semester follow:

September 23

Michael: What is a Geography, and Science, I don't understand. Mrs. Reed, we live in the North American or South America. Mrs. Reed look at Newspaper they are mat or what happen.

Teacher: Geography is the study of our earth. We found the continents and the oceans. Science is the study of things that change because of something. The volcano changes our earth because the core and magna push out. We live in North America. Which newspaper are you looking at?

September 24

Michael: What kind you dog, is it? What is a Health? I dont nown about this. Where are you live? and what kind your cat it is? I mean we looking newspaper name is Family of Strangers.

Teacher: My dog is a Pomeranian. One is called Muffin and one is called Cookie. Health is learning about our bodies and how we care for them. I live in West Los Angeles. It is about 12 ½ miles from the school. My cat is a Himalayan. She is very pretty. Did you see the T.V. show Family of Strangers?

It is not too difficult to learn from Michael's entries that his background, knowledge and culture cannot be expected to provide him with the presuppositions that native English speaking American children have. He requests, and gets, general facts about where he is and what he is doing there as a baseline of information out of which later, more cognitive discussion can emerge.

Language function thresholds

Although it has long been suspected that there is a synchrony in conversational practice, specific thresholds of such interaction have not been specified. By language function thresholds I refer to the level or point at which a specific rate of language function use will be employed and below which a different rate of language function use will occur.

These data indicate clearly three kinds of teacher language function thresholds. The first is as general threshold for all students regardless of their writing and regardless of their perceived competence.

The second kind of threshold is more specific to the student's relationship to the group norm. The third kind is specific to the ratios within the student's writing itself. Five percentage levels of student use of language functions are apparent: 6%, 10%, 20%, 30%, and a range of 25-50%. As the following chart indicates, when a student whose language function use in the dialogue journals goes above or below these percentages, the teacher recognizes a threshold for the use of such functions and responds differently in her own writing.

A. General Threshold

Student	Teacher
1. Reporting personal facts	
Regardless of student's writing or the teacher's perception of student's competence	Reports 25-50% more personal facts than the student does.
2. Reporting general facts	
Regardless of student's writing or the teacher's perception of the student's competence	Reports 25-50% more general facts than the student does.
B. Group-Norm Threshold	
3. Reporting general facts	
If the student is below the group norm (32.2%)	Reports 10% more than the student does.
C. Ratio of Language Functions Within the Student's Writing Threshold	
4. Reporting opinions	
If the student reports less than 20% opinions	Reports more than the student does.
If the student reports more than 30% opinions	Reports fewer than the student does.

5. Reporting personal facts

If the student reports fewer than 10% personal facts	Reports more than the student does.
If the student reports more than 10% personal facts	Reports fewer than the student does.

6. Evaluating

If the student evaluates over 6%	Evaluates less than the student does.
If the student evaluates less than 6%	Evaluates more than the student does.

7. Predicting

If the student predicts over 6%	Predicts less than the student does.
If the student predicts less than 6%	Predicts more than the student does.

One last point about language function thresholds must be made. There is no evidence that such thresholds are in any way conscious to the teacher.

Conclusion: The function of the functions

From this analysis of both the students' and the teacher's use of language functions in this sample of dialogue journal writing, several important conclusions can be drawn, as follows:

1. The more competent in English the nonnative English speaking student becomes, the more his or her frequency of use of specific language functions approaches the frequency of use of the teacher. For example, [illegible] Chal is regarded by the teacher as the most competent user of English in this sample. His frequency of language function use follows the teacher's in ranking for the five most frequently used functions and it approaches the teacher's percentage of use of each function much more closely than does that of any other student.

2. The more competent in English the nonnative English speaking student becomes, the broader becomes his or her range of frequently used language functions. The more competent English users (U Chal, Andy and Michael) use more language functions more frequently than do the less competent English users (Laura, Kemmy and Su Kyong). If breadth of use of language functions were the sole criterion for ranking the English ability of the students in this sample, the following ratings would obtain:

Most Competent	U Chal	10 language functions
↑	Andy	9 language functions
↕	Michael	9 language functions
↕	Laura	8 language functions
↓	Kemmy	6 language functions
	Su Kyong	5 language functions
Least Competent		

3. The teacher's frequency of use of language functions is not identical for all students in the groups she indicated as most competent or least competent. This suggests that there is more to her decision-making process of how to effectively communicate with each student than the selection of language functions. One might hypothesize that since writers whose purpose it is to communicate are not consciously aware of the language choices they make as they make such choices, the end result of such choices is dictated by the topics introduced or by some random processes. The evidence in these data, however, suggests something else. As noted earlier, the teacher's seven most frequently used language functions vary rather broadly across the six students. A closer look at the teacher's use of language functions to each student reveals threshold patterns which are extremely interesting, including the following:

a. The teacher reports between 25% and 50% as many personal and general facts as do the students, irrespective of each student's competence.

b. The teacher reports the most personal and general facts to students who report the most and she reports the fewest personal facts to the students who report the fewest.

c. To those students who do not report what the teacher considers to be an appropriate ratio of general facts, the teacher scaffolds them "up" by reporting approximately 10% more general facts than they do.

d. The more competent the teacher considers a student in English ability, the more she will scaffold "up" that student if she believes his frequency of general fact reporting is inordinately low.

e. The less competent the teacher considers a student in English ability, the more she will both request and give opinions.

f. The teacher will encourage a student to report opinions if that student reports fewer opinions than she expects (less than 20% of all student language functions), scaffolding them "up" by reporting her own opinions and soliciting theirs. Conversely the teacher will both report and solicit opinions less frequently if the students' ratio of reporting opinions exceeds 30% of their total language functions.

g. The teacher requests personal information more frequently (2 or 3 times more frequently) of students who do not report personal information if the threshold of such reporting is less than 10% of all their language functions. Conversely, if the student's ratio is over 10%, she reports her own personal information less frequently than they do.

h. The more competent in English ability the student is regarded by the teacher, the more the teacher requests academic information of that student. This practice indicates that a primary purpose of dialogue journal writing is to develop communicative competence before academic competence can become the topic of communication.

i. As a means of developing communicative competence, the teacher requests the students' opinions, a safe topic for which conventional school evaluation is less salient or intimidating. She does this, on the whole, at a rate of 3% to 5% of all her language functions unless other constraints obtain (see Michael, for example, discussed in k, following).

j. The teacher's threshold of evaluating and predicting hinges on the student's ratio of 6% of use of those functions. If the student is over 6%, the teacher evaluates and predicts less frequently than that. If the student rate is under 6%, the teacher evaluates and predicts more than that. This appears to be clear evidence of scaffolding at a constant threshold.

k. The less competent in English the teacher regards the student, the more directives she will give. This language function serves at least two communicative process functions: to discipline and to give clear procedures to follow. Our analysis does not break out the differences (nor is it clear exactly how this might be done). It seems obvious, however, that clear and simple directives have value for beginners in English. Little or no inferencing is required. Indirect directives have the advantage of politeness but are more difficult for nonnatives to process. To the least competent speakers of English (Laura and Su Kyong in particular) the teacher uses a high ratio of directives. Although Michael is regarded as more competent, he also receives a high ratio of directives. On the other hand, the topics discussed in Michael's journal also indicate that he frequently gets into trouble for fighting, a fact which clearly increases his teacher directive ratio, but for a different purpose than language learning.

4. The preceding teacher strategies and thresholds indicate clearly that the teacher varies her use of language functions taking into account the following principles:

   a. The relative English language competence of the student.
   b. The student's relative frequency of use of various language functions.
   c. The student's development in various language functions in relationship or balance to other language functions.
   d. The student's need to be scaffolded "up" or "down" in the use of various language functions.
   e. The student's need to develop communicative competence before academic competence.

5. A comparison of the teacher's use of language functions to nonnative English speakers with her use to native English speakers

reveals that the teacher has an implicit theory of teaching nonnatives which causes her to vary her practice to suit cross-cultural needs. She increases her own frequency of the language functions of reporting general facts and reporting opinions, toward the purpose of laying down a base line of non-intimidating and cross-culturally safe information which can serve as a foundation for continuing discussion and development. She also reduces her frequency of overly personal topics which might prove inappropriate, dangerous or painful to nonnative newcomers to this country. She also reduces the frequency of her evaluating and predicting functions until the necessary mutuality, trust and understanding are achieved.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHER QUESTIONS IN WRITTEN INTERACTION

Joy Kreeft

> With my questions in the journals, I deliberately attempt to promote the students' thinking. When they write about a problem or situation in the journal and I ask them things like, "What caused that?" or, "How did that happen", they think again about the situation and pursue it further in order to respond to the question that I have asked.
>
> I like to ask their opinions about things as well. Frequently when they write that they've read a certain book I write, "Well, do you think I'd like the book?". This makes them stop and think, "O.K. I like the book, but would it be a book that Mrs. Reed would like? Would she like the same things I like?" So they have to do some thinking before they can answer that question.
>
> Interview with Leslee Reed
> November, 1983

The majority of teachers and educators agree that question asking is an important part of the educational process. Most empirical studies of questioning in the classroom focus on teacher rather than student questions, and conclude that teacher questioning is one important variable influencing student achievement (Gall, 1970), and that the use of higher cognitive questions--questions that require the students

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Madeline Adkins conducted the majority of the analysis presented in this chapter.

to manipulate information or to create or support an answer with reasonable evidence (Winne, 1979)--has a positive effect on student achievement (Redfield and Rousseau, 1981).

Questions have also been found to be an important strategy in "foreigner talk discourse," talk by native speakers (NS) of a language when interacting with nonnative speakers (NNS), for questions both help to make greater quantities of linguistic input comprehensible to the NNS and provide more opportunities for the NNS to speak (Long and Sato, 1983).

From the quotation that begins this chapter, it is clear that questions are considered an important aspect of the teaching of Mrs. Reed, the majority of whose students are nonnative speakers of English. The dialogue journal interaction provides for her the opportunity to ask questions that promote student thought and facilitate communication. The purpose of this study is to investigate the role of Mrs. Reed's questions in the dialogue journals of the six students learning English as a second language (ESL) who are the focus of this report, to examine: the quantity and nature of the questions that she asks; whether her questioning patterns vary with students who are native English speakers and with nonnative speakers, among individual students, and over ten months time; and whether there are changes over time in the students' questioning and response patterns. The analysis will show that the questioning patterns found in the journals differ in several ways from those typical of classroom discourse, and I will suggest that the patterns found in these dialogue journals provide a model for questioning patterns between students and teachers during other activities in the ESL or foreign language classroom, where the primary emphasis must be on communication and the development of language facility rather than on the testing of specific kinds of knowledge.

Background: Questions in classrooms, in dialogue journals, and in foreigner talk discourse

In a study of questioning patterns in the dialogue journals of Mrs. Reed and a sixth grade class of native English speakers, Kreeft (1982) found that Mrs. Reed's questions differed in several ways from patterns of teacher questions that have been found to occur typically in classroom discourse. By way of introduction to the present study, the contrasts between questions in these two contexts (dialogue journal interaction and classroom discourse) will be reviewed. Findings from studies of questioning patterns of native speakers in "foreign talk discourse" will also be reviewed.

Questions in the classroom

One conclusion that has been drawn from studies of questioning behavior in classroom interaction is that an important function of teacher questions is to establish and maintain the teacher's role as authority:

> . . . the use of questions in the teaching situation is structured by the fact that the teacher-pupil relationship always tends to be defined in terms of status inequality, with superiority stressed as intrinsic to the teacher's role. (Goody, 1978, p. 41)

This function of questions as a means of control is not confined to the classroom, but is possible in all interactions between interlocutors of unequal status:

> Questioning is one of the ways through which one speaker attempts to exert control over another. . . . it is a realization or an expression of authority relationships. (Mishler, 1975, p. 105)

There are three reasons that question asking in the classroom can be seen as one means for the teacher to maintain conversational control. The first reason has to do with the nature of questions in any spoken interaction. A question constitutes the first half of an "adjacency pair" (Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson, 1974) and thus, "compels, requires, may even demand a response" (Goody, 1978, p. 23). Thus, in one sense the person who asks the questions can be said to have conversational control.

The next two reasons are related particularly to the structure of question asking in the classroom. In the classroom, one person, the teacher, dominates the question asking, first by asking many more questions than the students (Politzer, 1980; Shuy, 1981b; Heath, 1982; Dillon, 1982). Politzer, for example, found that from 94% to 97% of the "requests" (which included, in that study, both requests for information and requests for action) made in the classroom were made by the teacher. Also, the teacher's questions usually serve to initiate a three-part question-answer-feedback exchange (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975; Mishler, 1975; McHoul, 1978; Mehan, 1979; Long and Sato, 1983; Stubbs, 1983) such as:

Teacher:	What's the capital of France?	Initiation
Student:	Paris.	Reply
Teacher:	Right.	Feedback
Teacher:	And Germany?	Initiation
Student:	Bonn.	Reply
Teacher:	Good.	Feedback

(example from Stubbs, 1983, p. 29)

Thus, with an initiating question, the teacher both establishes the topic and incurs upon the student the obligation to respond (the second part of the adjacency pair, as discussed above). When the student has responded, the teacher has the right to speak again, either with another question--and thus continuing the "topic chain" (Mishler, 1975) that he or she has started--or with an evaluation of the student's reply before asking another question.

The third reason that classroom questioning serves to maintain teacher control is that the majority of the questions asked by teachers during classroom interaction are not for the purpose of gaining real information that the teacher lacks or even for the purpose of discussing, with the student, information that they both may lack, but for the purpose of checking or testing whether the student possesses the information requested (as in "What's the capital of France?" in the example above) or, in a language classroom, to check whether the student has the language ability to answer the question (as in, "What's your name?"). Such questions, referred to as "evaluative questions" (Kearsley, 1976), "training questions" (Goody, 1978), or "display questions" (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975; Mehan, 1979; Shuy, 1981b; Long and Sato, 1983), have been found to predominate in classroom interaction.

The three characteristics of teacher questions outlined above have been found in virtually all studies of classroom discourse. Mishler summarizes the pattern thus:

> The picture that emerges . . . is of a rather restricted and highly controlled adult-child exchange where the adult asks a constraining yes/no question, receives a one-word response, and then terminates the exchange by a direct acknowledgment of the child's answer. (Mishler, 1978, p. 287)

Even when the topic of conversation is outside the focus of the classroom study, the "instructional" pattern tends to be retained, as in this conversation between an adult and a child about a baseball game:

Adult:	Was it three ta two?
Child:	Yeah.
Adult:	The Red Sox won?
Child:	Yeah.
Adult:	Oh, that's great. I didn't watch it. Was iot on television or radio?

(Mishler, 1978, p. 288)

Questions in dialogue journal interaction

In the dialogue journal writing of Mrs. Reed and her students, question patterns differ in several ways from those found in classroom discourse. The following data and conclusions come from Kreeft, 1982, a study of the dialogue journals of Mrs. Reed and 26 students who are native English speakers.

1. The first difference is in the sheer ratio of teacher-to-student questions as shown in Table 7.1.

N=26 Students	Fall (10 days)		Spring (10 days)	
Students	136/353	39%	109/440	25%
Teacher	217/353	61%	331/440	75%

Table 7.1. Number of student and teacher questions. Native English speakers.

Although the teacher still asks the majority of questions, the ratio of teacher to student questions is very different from that found in classroom discourse. The students ask a substantial percentage of the questions in the journals, especially at the beginning of the year.

2. The second area of difference lies in the stucture of the question-response pattern in dialogue journal interaction. Since the interaction is written rather than spoken, it takes place in non-real time and thus a reply is expected, but not required to the extent that it is in speech. In fact, neither the students nor the teacher in Kreeft's study responded to more than 75 percent of the questions asked of them in the journals. This means that the power of a question to demand a reply and thereby exert control is diminished. Also, the majority of the teacher's questions, rather than initiating a topic (as in the Initiation-Reply-Feedback sequence found in classroom discourse), occur in response to a topic that the student has initiated. Table 7.2 shows the percentage of all of the teacher's questions that are used to initiate topics and the percentage that respond to topics initiated by the students (for a sample of ten students). As the year progresses, the percentage of responding questions increases. Thus, a typical

N=10 Students	Fall (10 days)		Spring (10 days)	
Topic initiating questions	36/85	42%	37/123	30%
Topic responding questions	49/85	58%	86/123	70%

Table 7.2. Teacher initiating and responding questions with native English speakers.

exchange about one topic during one day in a dialogue journal tends to look like the following:

> Student: . . . I noticed that you had two new of my favorite books. "Hang Tough, Paul Mather," (Alfred Slote) and "Soup and Me." . . .
>
> Teacher: . . . We can thank Mrs. W for getting in the new books. They do look great! *Do you think Judy Blume or Alfred Slote is the class's favorite author? Would you like to do a survey*? . . .
>
> (Emphasis mine.)

The fact that the teacher's questions in the journals tend to be "responding questions" rather than "initiating questions" means that although the teacher asks more questions than the students do, it is the students who determine what topics will be written about, as they initiate the majority of the topics in the dialogue journals. (The students in the 1982 study initiated 88% of all the dialogue journal topics in the fall and 79% in the spring; Staton and Kreeft, 1982.)

3. The third area of difference lies in the type of questions that the teacher asks in the dialogue journals. In the 1982 study Mrs. Reed asked very few display questions--four (5% of all questions) in the fall and none in the spring. The majority of her questions elicited information about the students themselves and their activities and interests (29% of all teacher questions in the fall and 40% in the spring) or opinions (53% in the fall and 40% in the spring). Another type of question, the "reflective question," also appeared in the spring sample (13% of all questions in the spring). This type of question requested that the student think through a situation or problem, for example: "Does it make you feel any better to know that you are learning to cope with this type of person?"

In summary, the 1982 study of the patterns of teacher questions in dialogue journals with native English speaking sixth graders showed that questions are an important part of the teacher's writing, but rather than serving to control the interaction and the topics to be discussed or to test student knowledge, they seemed to promote interaction and student self-expression.

Questions in native speaker-nonnative speaker interaction

Research on NS-NNS interaction (Hatch, 1978b; Scarcella and Higa, 1981; Long, 1981a and 1981b; Gaies, 1982) shows that questions play an important role in sustaining such interactions and facilitating the participation of the NNS, for questions serve to: provide opportunities for the NNS to speak by "compelling" them to respond; signal turns for the NNS to speak; make conversational topics salient; open the door for the NNS to give relatively easy answers (this is particularly true of yes-no questions in which "Yes" or "No" suffice as a response and/or choice questions such as, "Are you studying or working here in the United States?," where the NNS need supply only one of the two choices given in the question); and repair breakdowns in the conversation that result from a lack of understanding by one of the interlocutors. Thus, questions represent one of many ways in which the structure of interaction with a NNS is modified to enable the NNS to participate in the interaction and receive comprehensible input.

This review of questioning patterns in these different contexts--classroom interaction, student-teacher dialogue journal interaction, and conversations between native speakers and nonnative speakers--is not meant to disparage the patterns found in classroom interaction, for they may be a necessary result of two coexisting factors. First, one teacher must keep order and interact with a number of students at the same time, as well as assure that a certain amount of material is covered and mastered (Shuy, 1981). Second, the balance of authority in the classroom is necessarily unequal. The problem with such questioning patterns in the language classroom is that the goal there is to provide practice with and promote facility in the new language, and such patterns as those typically found in classroom interaction may not be optimal for accomplishing that goal. Long and Sato (1983), in a study of teacher speech in ESL classrooms, show that while there has been increasing emphasis in the past few years on the communicative use of language in the teaching of ESL, questioning patterns in the ESL classroom continue to focus on form and accuracy (with a high percentage of display questions) rather than on communication. Thus, there appears to be a discrepancy between our purposes in the teaching of ESL and our classroom practice, and new patterns of questioning may need to be available.

This study

The purpose of this study is to extend the analysis of Mrs. Reed's questioning patterns in the dialogue journal interaction to a new corpus, the dialogue journals of nonnative English speaking students (see Chapter One for a description of the corpus and Chapter Two for a profile of each student). The discussion in this section will focus on two areas: patterns of teacher questions related to number of questions, place of the questions in the interaction, question type, question form, and variation in the form and type of questions asked of individual students; and changes over time in the students' writing in response to the teacher's questions. Where possible, comparisons will be made with the findings of the previous study of the dialogue journals of native English speakers.

For each of the six students, three samples of dialogue journal writing, each twenty interactions long (each "interaction" consists of one student entry and one teacher entry) were analyzed (details on the samples for each of the students are in Appendix II to Chapter One). The samples were taken from the fall, winter, and spring, so that changes in patterns that may occur during the year could be examined.

As in some previous studies of questions (Kearsley, 1976; Kreeft, 1982, and others), what constitutes a "question" is determined by its function rather than by its form. That is, a question is considered a request for a verbal (in this case written) response from the addressee (what Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975, called an "elicitation") whether this request takes the form of an interrogative ("When is P.E.?"), an imperative ("Please tell me when P.E. is."), or a statement ("I don't know when P.E. is."). This means that some interrogatives that occur in these data are not included in this analysis of questions, because they request an action ("Will you please bring my book tomorrow?") rather than a verbal reply (a verbal reply may, of course, be given here, but this is not the primary function of this question).

Patterns of teacher questions

Number of questions asked

Table 7.3 shows the raw numbers and percentages of student and teacher questions asked during the three sample periods. As was found in the previous study, the teacher consistently asks the higher percentage of questions, but she does not control the question asking as is typical of classroom interaction. Here, the students ask nearly half of the questions.

	Fall		Winter		Spring	
Student questions	42	33%	80	42%	97	45%
Teacher questions	85	67%	111	58%	118	55%
TOTAL	127		191		215	

Table 7.3. Number of student and teacher questions. Nonnative English speakers.

Place of the questions in the interaction

As in the previous study, the teacher's questions were classified as either "initiating" or "responding." Initiating questions initiate a new topic, as in:

Teacher: *What book are you reading*?

Student: I'm reading of the book call "A Dog and a half." I think it is a good store. The store is the one boy and one girls and one day the girls want a dog and they tell her father I want a dog and they go to store and they want dog.

Responding questions respond to a topic initiated by the other person, as in:

Student: at the lunch time I help the Safety . . . the thirt grate play the lunch finish so no drink water so I help the Safety, and I tell him go to the other water sink.

Teacher: *Did the safety want you to help him*?

(Emphasis in both examples mine.)

Table 7.4 shows the percentage of teacher questions that initiate new topics relative to those that respond to student topics. As in the previous study, the majority of the teacher's questions occur in response to topics that the students have initiated. At the same time, the students more frequently use questions in topic initiations. This is shown in Table 7.5.

	Fall		Winter		Spring	
Initiating questions	31	36%	32	29%	39	33%
Responding questions	54	64%	79	71%	79	67%
TOTAL	85		111		118	

Table 7.4. Teacher initiating and responding questions. With nonnative English speakers.

	Fall		Winter		Spring	
Initiating questions	28	67%	61	76%	77	79%
Responding questions	14	33%	19	24%	20	21%
TOTAL	42		80		97	

Table 7.5. Student initiating and responding questions. Nonnative English speakers.

Question type

Mrs. Reed's questions were categorized as (the examples given here come from the dialogue journals analyzed):

1. Request for information--requests information about the student's school-related or personal activities and affairs ("Will you have more time to do your math test?"; "Where does your aunt live?").

2. Request for opinion--requests the student's opinion of

school-related or personal activities and affairs ("The bicycle safety program was so good. Do you think they are smart to wear special clothes?"; "It sounds like you had fun eating pizza. Was it as good as the school pizza?").

3. Request for clarification--usually requests clarification of what the student has written previously in the journal ("I'm not sure your idea is clear. Could you explain it?").

4. Display question--as discussed previously, requests a display by the student of knowledge that the teacher possesses: "As the grass leaves grow up what happens when you turn the glass? Do the seeds send the leaves up or out the side?" (These questions concern a science project they are discussing in the journal).

5. Reflective question--This type of question occurs infrequently in the journals, and it is the most difficult to classify. It is not a request for information, opinion, or clarification, and a written answer does not appear to be required. Rather the request is more that the student think about the question proposed. Because so few of this question type occurred in the data, all of the questions that were categorized as reflective are listed here:

> to Michael: "I'm sorry you and Simon had a problem. How can you get your work done when you tear up your work?"
>
> "How do you request (ask) for something so you will have a better chance to get what you want? Did you ask me for help?"
>
> "Yes, your drawing really did improve! I did not want you to have Jung An do your drawing because then you don't learn, do you?"

to Andy: "We do not fight at Alexandria. If you fight you can be suspended from school. What can you do so you will not fight? Can you walk away from Jesus? Can you play like you do not hear him?"

to Laura: "If you were following the school rules you would not have had a problem with Michael, would you?

"Do you like to be bossed around? I don't either. Do you like people who boss you?"

Table 7.6 gives the raw frequencies and percentages of teacher question types in the three sample periods. Display questions make up a very small percentage of the total.

	Fall		Winter		Spring	
Information	41	48%	58	52%	66	56%
Opinion	34	40%	42	38%	37	31%
Clarification	5	6%	3	3%	6	5%
Display	4	5%	5	5%	3	3%
Reflective	1	1%	3	3%	6	5%
TOTAL	85		111		118	

Table 7.6. Types of teacher questions to nonnative English speakers.

It is clear from the findings presented so far related to number and type of teacher questions and place of the questions in the interaction that with these beginning speakers of English, as with the native speakers, Mrs. Reed's questioning patterns are very different from those typical of classroom interaction. Rather than dominate the question asking, Mrs. Reed shares with the students the power to ask questions. Rather than use questions to determine which topics are discussed, she relinguishes her role as the initiator of topics and uses questions to continue topics that the students have initiated. Rather than test the students' knowledge and ability to express themselves with display questions, sne asks questions about things that she really wants to know. The result is a student-initiated ongoing interaction, rather than a teacher-initiated three-part exchange, in which there is the opportunity for both interlocutors to participate equally, both seeking and providing information, as this series of entries from U Chal's journal illustrates:

U Chal: S-14 Oct. 6	In 10 million year later the men do one other map? What you like do in your house? Do you go vacation in other country?
Teacher: T-14	Yes, men will keep making maps! They are making new maps all of the time. In my home I like to cook, to grow plants, to read and to sew. What do you like to do? Sometimes we vacation in Canada or Mexico or Hawaii. I want to go to Korea some day. Do you want to go back to Brazil sometime?
U Chal: S-15	In my house I like to watch T.V., read book, ride bike and go to swim pol. Maybe one day I go to Brazil to visit my frindes. Your Korean Grandson speak koreian?
Teacher: T-15	Do you have a swimming pool? I like to swim but I don't have a pool. You have friends in Brazil who can come visit you? Where did you live in Brazil? My Korean Grandson does not speak Korean anymore. We do not know the Korean language so he learned English. I hope he will go to Korean class to learn to speak Korean again. He is a very smart boy.

U Chal: No, I don't have a pool. Some days one
S-16 friend of my father come and go to hes pool.

My friends not come to visit one day, my friends born in Brazil and for him Brazil is best for him. I live in Brazil on the state of Sao Paulo, one for month in Rio de Janeiro.

Do you have one friend in the farm and he or she live in Los Angeles?

The difference between the student's participation in this kind of interaction and the brief student replies found in Initiation-Reply-Feedback sequences in the classroom is clear.

Variation in teacher questions

In this section we are interested in whether there is variation in both the type of questions that Mrs. Reed asks and the form of her questions, related to the level of English proficiency of the student.

Variation in question type

> I think a teacher naturally varies questions depending on where the students are. The initial questions are making sure they have the facts. When they have the facts, then you can ask questions to see if they can generalize about those facts.
>
> Interview with Leslee Reed
> November, 1983

We described above how the types of questions asked by Mrs. Reed have been classified as: requests for information, opinion, clarification, display of knowledge, or reflection, and have shown that display questions occur infrequently in these journals. In the previous study of the dialogue journals of native speakers it was found that the majority of the questions asked in both the fall and spring were opinion and reflective questions. With the nonnative speakers in the present study, the majority of questions are information questions. This comparision is shown in Table 7.7.

	Fall		Spring	
native speakers				
information questions	25/85	29%	49/123	40%
opinion & reflective questions	46/85	53%	65/123	53%
nonnative speakers				
information questions	41/85	48%	66/118	56%
opinion and reflective questions	35/85	41%	42/118	36%

Table 7.7. Teacher information, opinion, and reflective questions with native and nonnative speakers.

There is also variation between the two student groups in the focus of the information and opinion questions--either on school-related ("academic") activities or on personal activities. In the journals of the native speakers, there is a shift during the year from questions about school activities to questions about personal activities. With the nonnative speakers the focus remains on school activities throughout the year. This comparison is shown in Table 7.8.

Whether the teacher asks a question relating to an academic topic or a personal topic depends to a great extent on what the student writes about, since the majority of teacher questions are responses to student topics. But what we see here is a greater focus with the nonnative speakers on the school context that the students and teacher

	Fall		Spring	
native speakers *				
academic	51/70	73%	24/98	24%
personal	6/70	9%	55/98	56%
nonnative speakers				
academic	51/75	68%	63/103	61%
personal	24/75	32%	40/103	39%

* These do not total 100%, because in the study of native speakers there was another category for "interpersonal" questions as well.

Table 7.8. Teacher information and opinion questions focusing on academic and personal topics. With native speakers and nonnative speakers.

share, the same sort of focus on the "here and now" that has been found both in numerous studies of interactions with first language learners (Cross, 1977; Moerk, 1974; Wells, 1981, for example) and in studies of interaction with nonnative speakers (Long, 1981b). In a similar vein, Lindholm and Romero (1984) found a shift in questions addressed to two children learning ESL from questions regarding factual information to questions regarding information about personal and others' activities and thoughts, as the language proficiency of the children increased.

Mrs. Reed seems to have established a hierarchy of question difficulty, related to the level of English proficiency of her students, listed here from most to least difficult:

Reflective questions
Opinion about personal activities
Information about personal activities
Opinion about school activities
Information about school activities
Display

This pattern is particularly evident in Kemmy's journal. He is the least proficient of all of the students in this study, having only recently arrived from Vietnam when he first entered Mrs. Reed's class, only minimally proficient in spoken English and barely able to write. Mrs. Reed asks him six of the twelve display questions that she asks all year, and a couple of these are fill-in-the-blank questions, for example:

> Today Kemmy played the number game. The numbers are "one, five, twenty, two, and twenty-one." The biggest number is 21 and the smallest number is _____.

The majority of questions that she asks him are information questions about school activities, such as:

> Did you play handball today? You worked on the map of China today. Did you put Hong Kong on your map?

Since these questions request a simple report of what he did that day, they are very similar to display questions. At the same time, the majority of the questions that she asks of the more advanced students are either information questions about personal, non-school activities:

> Yes! Everyone has to go to Disneyland when they come to Los Angeles! Have you been there?

or opinion questions:

> We'll work on a report about world food sources and supplies. Would you rather do it alone or with a committee?

Mrs. Reed asks reflective questions only of Laura, Michael, and Andy, the three more proficient students (and never of Kemmy and Su Kyong), and these only later in the year, in the winter and spring samples (the reflective questions found in these journals are listed on pages 259 and 260).

Variation in question form

> Yes-no questions for students who are just learning the language serve a very useful purpose because the students can answer the question and know what they're saying "yes" or "no" to. If you ask them "why" or "how," they may be at a loss to even be able to answer the question. They may not have the vocabulary or they may not understand the concepts enough to be able to say why or how. But if they're learning anything, they can say, "Yes, it is green" or, "No, it is not green" rather than, "It is green because it is now spring and the weather has turned warm." There's more context provided. So I suspect that the questions I ask tend to be more yes-no, to make them feel secure that they know what we're writing about. Later, with more advanced students, I like to switch to wh questions simply to get them to compose their thoughts and write them down. They have to reflect on their answer and make their meaning clear. They have to reflect on their answer and make their meaning clear.
>
> Interview with Leslee Reed
> November, 1983

In this study of the question forms that Mrs. Reed uses in the dialogue journals, we are interested in what forms occur the most frequently and whether there is any variation in form with native or non-native speakers, from student to student, or over time.

Questions were classified according to form as:

1. Statement--have the form of a declarative, but elicit information or an opinion.

2. Wh--begin with who, when, where, what, why, and how, or have the wh word in an embedded clause ("Can you tell me where you went?"; "I'm not sure what your last sentence says.").

3. Yes-no--only a "yes" or "no" repsonse is required, although other responses are possible, and occur frequently in these data.

4. Tag--a statement with a question contained in the final clause. Only a positive or negative reply is required, and one possible reply is provided as part of the question. Generally, questions are regarded as tags only when the same subject appears in both clauses, but I included also questions such as, "I liked the concert, did you?". Technically, this is a yes-no question, but it includes one possible reply like a tag question, as contrasted with a yes-no question.

5. Or-choice--provides two or more possible responses from which to choose: "What's your favorite subject, math or spelling?".

Most scholars agree that the question forms listed above range along a continuum, depending on the amount of information provided in the question and therefore the amount of "work" demanded in the response.

Kearsley (1976) calls 1 and 2 above "open" questions because they do not contain a preposition and 3 to 5 , "closed questions," because a complete preposition is contained in the question. Shuy (1981b) gives a range, from most to least open. Following Shuy, the question forms are listed as they range along a continuum from most to least demand placed on the receiver, thus most to least easy to answer.

Most demand placed on the receiver

Statement	Tell me about the party.
Wh	How was the party?
Yes-no	Did you like the party?
Tag	It was a good party, wasn't it? I liked the party, did you?
Or-choice	Which did you like better, the party or the movie?

Least demand

Researchers have found that in talk by caretakers to first language acquirers (Goody, 1978), talk by native speakers to nonnative speakers (Gaies, 1982), and teacher talk to students (Shuy, 1981) yes-no questions predominate over wh questions. Hatch (1978b) reports that native speakers often "shift down" their questions to nonnative speakers from a wh to a yes-no to an or-choice question. French and MacLure (1981) report the same process of shifting down used by teachers with young children. At the same time, Kearsley (1976) found that wh questions predominate in talk between native speakers.

Table 7.9 shows the frequencies with which Mrs. Reed uses each question form in the dialogue journals:

	Fall		Winter		Spring	
yes-no	63	74%	63	57%	90	76%
wh	16	19%	28	25%	15	13%
tag	5	6%	15	14%	11	9%
or-choice	1	1%	4	4%	2	2%
statement	0	0%	1	.9%	0	0%
TOTAL	85		111		118	

Table 7.9. Teacher question forms with nonnative speakers.

There is a clear preference for yes-no questions, with wh being the second most frequent and tag the third most frequent form. The other two forms are used very infrequently. There is little variation in this form throughout the school year. It is also quite consistent from student to student, as shown in Table 7.10 on the next page.

		Fall		Winter		Spring	
yes-no							
U Chal		15/22	68%	11/19	58%	14/23	61%
Michael		5/13	38%	13/23	57%	8/14	57%
Andy		7/10	70%	12/17	71%	8/10	80%
Laura		8/10	80%	5/11	45%	22/29	76%
Su Kyong		19/21	90%	8/18	44%	13/17	76%
Kemmy		9/9	100%	14/23	61%	25/25	100%
	TOTAL	63/85	74%	63/111	57%	90/118	76%
wh							
U Chal		6/22	27%	4/19	21%	4/23	17%
Michael		4/13	31%	4/23	17%	4/14	29%
Andy		2/10	20%	3/17	18%	2/10	20%
Laura		2/10	20%	5/11	45%	4/29	14%
Su Kyong		2/21	10%	5/18	28%	1/17	6%
Kemmy		0	0%	7/23	30%	0	0%
	TOTAL	16/85	19%	28/111	25%	15/118	13%
tag							
U Chal		1/22		3/19		3/23	
Michael		3/13		6/23		2/14	
Andy		1/10		0		0	
Laura		0		1/11		3/29	
Su Kyong		0		4/18		3/17	
Kemmy		0		1/23		0	
	TOTAL	5/85	6%	15/111	14%	11/118	9%
or-choice							
U Chal		0		1/19		2/23	
Michael		1/13		0		0	
Andy		0		1/17		0	
Laura		0		0		0	
Su Kyong		0		1/18		0	
Kemmy		0		1/23		0	
	TOTAL	1/85	1%	4/111	4%	2/118	2%
statement							
U Chal		0		0		0	
Michael		0		0		0	
Andy		0		1/17		0	
Laura		0		0		0	
Su Kyong		0		0		0	
Kemmy		0		0		0	
	TOTAL	0		1/111	.99%	0	0%

Table 7.10. Teacher question forms with individual students (nonnative English speakers).

There is variation in the questions to Kemmy and Su Kyong, the two least proficient students in the sample. In the fall and spring Mrs. Reed asks Kemmy only *yes-no* questions and Su Kyong primarily *yes-no* and tag questions. In the winter she seems to try some *wh* questions, but decides that *yes-no* questions are suited to their proficiency level.

To provide a basis for comparison of question forms with more proficient English speakers, I also looked at Mrs. Reed's questions to the ten native speakers in the journals from the previous study. Patterns are similar in that *yes-no* questions are the most frequent, *wh* the second most frequent, and *tags*, *or-choice*, and *statements*, infrequent, as shown in Table 7.11.

	Fall		Spring	
yes-no	57	68%	71	57%
wh	17	20%	35	28%
tag	4	5%	9	7%
or-choice	1	1%	8	6%
statement	5	6%	1	.7%
TOTAL	84		124	

Table 7.11. Teacher question forms with native English speakers.

There is a difference, however, in the frequency of *yes-no* and *wh* questions to the two groups of students. These are compared in Table 7.12.

	Fall		Spring	
yes-no				
nonnative speakers	63/85	74%	90/118	76%
native speakers	57/84	68%	71/124	57%
wh				
nonnative speakers	16/85	19%	15/118	13%
native speakers	17/84	20%	35/124	28%

Table 7.12. Teacher yes-no and wh questions with native speakers and nonnative speakers.

In the fall only a slightly lower percentage of yes-no questions are asked of the native speakers than of the nonnative speakers. In the spring there is a decrease in yes-no questions and an increase in wh questions to the native speakers, while with the nonnative speakers the frequency of yes-no questions remains constant and the wh questions decrease somewhat. Thus, by the spring, when Mrs. Reed has had several months to assess the students' language ability, there is a substantial difference in the frequency of question forms asked to the two groups.

There is evidence in the data from the two studies that Mrs. Reed gears the form of her questions to suit what she assesses to be the language ability of her students, using more wh questions with the native speakers. With the least proficient nonnative speakers she begins by using primarily yes-no questions. She begins to use wh questions halfway through the year, but shifts back to yes-no and tag questions near the end of the year, when presumably she discovers that the wh questions are too difficult.

Teacher questions and student writing in the dialogue journals

Our third area of interest in this study is the relationship between Mrs. Reed's questions and certain aspects of the students' writing. One function that questions serve is to signal a desire to interact. With her questions, Mrs. Reed makes this desire clear, with the intended goal that the students will interact as well. As Kreeft (1984a) and Morroy (this volume) point out, questions can also play a valuable role in promoting and aiding student writing, for they scaffold the student's thought, (cf. Staton, 1984b), and thus can lead from writing that is assisted by the teacher in interaction to extended prose, created by the student without assistance.

In this section, we will look at three aspects of the students' writing that demonstrate a desire to interact. The first two have to do with theirs and the teacher's questions: the rate of response to the teacher's questions and the number of questions that they ask the teacher. The third has to do with the desire or ability to continue to write about one topic over several entries.

Student response rate to teacher questions

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the fact that dialogue journal interaction is written means that a question does not have the same force to compel a reply, as it does in speech. Questions are written to elicit a reply, of course, but often several topics are written about in one journal entry and several questions asked, so that it is possible to be selective in responses, and some comments and questions are not responded to. Even the teacher does not respond to all of the students' questions (in this study her response rate ranges from around 60 to 90%). At the same time, a student response to a question does indicate that the student has read and understands what was written, and in formulating the response, the student gets more language practice.

Table 7.13 shows the response rates by each student to the teacher's questions and Figure 7.1 demonstrates more clearly the pattern for each student across the year. There is a clear difference in response rate related to language proficiency. U Chal, the most proficient student, consistently responds to almost all of the questions and Su Kyong and Kemmy, the least proficient students, respond to the fewest. Michael, Laura, and Andy fall in the middle.

In each case (except for U Chal, who has a high response rate all year), the response rate increases over the ten months, a sign that the student is learning to respond to questions and thus becoming more interactive.

	Fall		Winter		Spring	
U Chal	21/22	95%	19/19	100%	21/23	91%
Michael	7/13	54%	12/23	52%	11/14	81%
Andy	1/10	10%	14/17	82%	5/10	50%
Laura	5/10	50%	9/11	82%	17/29	59%
Su Kyong	1/21	5%	0/18	0%	4/17	24%
Kemmy	1/9	11%	9/23	39%	4/25	16%
TOTAL	36/85	42%	63/111	57%	62/118	53%

Table 7.13. Student response rate to teacher questions.

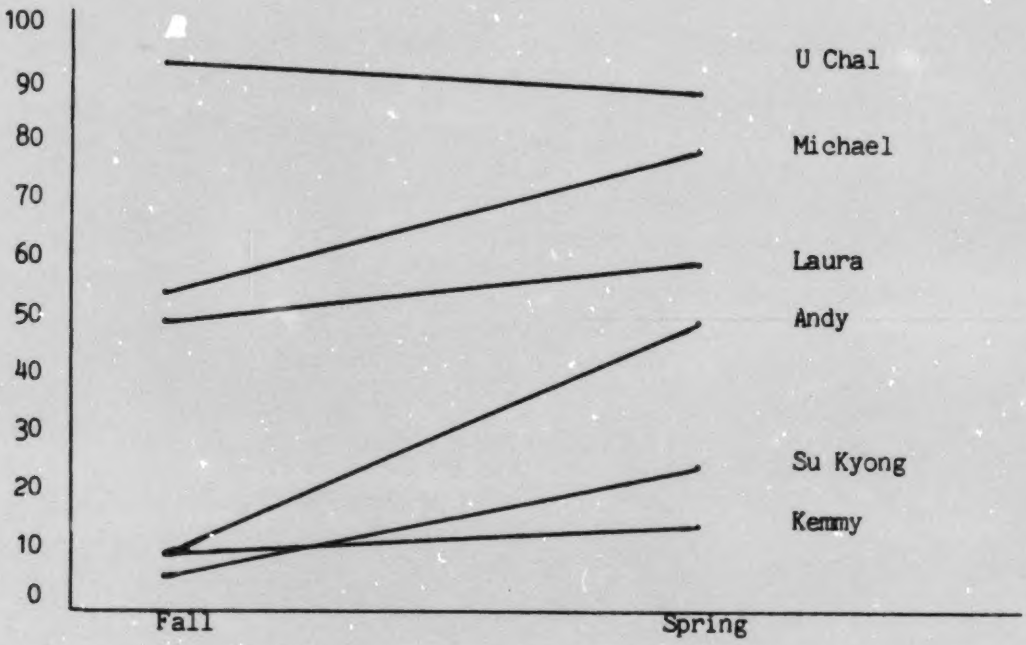


Figure 7.1. Student response rate to teacher questions.

Frequency of student questions

Another sign that the student is participating in the interaction is when he or she asks questions. Table 7.14 shows the number of questions that each student asks in each of the sample periods.

	Fall	Winter	Spring
U Chal	27	21	4
Michael	13	24	43
Andy	1	10	7
Laura	0	4	26
Su Kyong	0	0	3
Kemmy	1	21	14
TOTAL	42	80	97

Table 7.14. Number of student questions.

For each student, the increase in responses to the teacher's questions that we saw earlier is accompanied by an increase in the number of questions that the student asks, indicating that each student has an increased desire and/or ability to interact as the year progresses. The only exception to the general pattern is U Chal. While his response rate remains high, there is a sharp decrease in the number of questions that he asks in the spring. However, in his case this decrease does not indicate a decreased desire to communicate. On the contrary, he begins the year asking more questions than any other student. By the end of the year he and Mrs. Reed have established such a rapport in their dialogue journal that they sustain "conversations" about topics over a number of entries, without depending on question-answer exchanges for motivation. In the following exchange that occurred in May, they carry on a conversation for three days about getting hit by a ball, which looks a lot like a face-to-face conversation two friends might have.

Teacher:	How does your face feel? That ball bounced off of your hand right into your face. I hope your face isn't bruised.
U Chal:	It didn't hurt much I had bad bumps in my head before . . . Today was Jung An turn to get the ball on his face.
Teacher:	Good! I was glad to see you this morning and see that you did not have a black eye or a swollen nose! I'll check Jung An in the morning to see if he has a black eye! We are learning to catch balls in an unusual way!
U Chal:	I think that the ball didn't hurt to much to Jung An because it was a rubber ball.
Teacher:	Rubber balls aren't as hard. Usually rubber balls aren't thrown as hard as softballs either.

Student continuation of topics

A third sign that the student is participating in the interaction is the number of topics that are extended for several entries in the journals. As Morroy (this volume) explains, an "extended topic chain" is a topic about which the student writes for more than one turn. The exchange above from U Chal's journal is such an extended chain, of five turns. This contrasts with topics that are introduced, responded to, and dropped, as in this example from Su Kyong's journal:

Su Kyong:	today lunch time I'm dancing so fun lola to and Janny to going.
Teacher:	Yes! It is fun to dance at noon! Were there any others from our class there?
Su Kyong:	[no response]

Table 7.15 shows, of the total number of topics introduced in the journals by the students, the percentage that are continued by the students for at least one more turn.

	Fall		Winter		Spring	
U Chal	8/23	35%	10/22	45%	7/13	54%
Michael	5/46	11%	16/64	25%	11/64	17%
Andy	0/44	0%	5/156	3%	5/39*	13%
Laura	6/13	46%	9/38	24%	10/53	19%
Su Kyong	1/26	4%	0/31	0%	4/26	15%
Kemmy	2/70	3%	4/118	3%	4/85	5%
TOTAL	22/222	10%	44/391	11%	41/280	15%

* This number represents only seven interactions for Andy in the spring sample. See Morroy, this volume, for explanation.

Table 7.15. Extended topic chains out of total topics introduced by student.

The percentages in Table 7.15 indicate a tendency by all of the students except Laura to interact over time about a greater number of topics as the year progresses. This means that rather than introducing and dropping topics after one entry, there is a greater exchange of information about a given topic at the end of the year than at the beginning. It remains to be determined to what extent questions by the teacher in particular serve to continue these topic chains, but preliminary findings indicate that they play a major role.

Conclusions

> My writing in the journal is done with the purpose of keeping the dialogue going--letting the students know that I want to know their opinions and their thoughts—that these are important to me. If I don't attempt to keep the dialogue open, the conversation could die. I've talked with teachers who said that after a couple of months the journals just went flat. But the students need to know that we really solicit and want their thoughts and ideas. This helps us to know what's going on and builds their self-esteem.
>
> Interview with Leslee Reed
> November, 1983

> As part of our correspondence in journal writing, we have to constantly be opening doors so that the student can write further. . . . If you want to keep the door open, you have to not close off a topic. . . . You have to respond with something, so that the conversation continues. You're prompting. You're keeping something going, and it's their option whether they want to pick up on it or not.
>
> Interview with Leslee Reed
> June, 1982

An obvious goal of dialogue journal writing is that an ongoing "conversation" develop, within which students receive exposure to comprehensible language and are encouraged to think about what they want to write and to express themselves clearly. As we have seen here, Mrs. Reed's questions play an important part in the fulfillment of this goal. For this reason I have been careful to present here a detailed analysis of many aspects of the questioning patterns of Mrs. Reed and the six students in this study. In this section, the implications that the findings of this study have for classroom interaction will be outlined. But first it must be pointed out that asking questions is not the only or even the most frequent language function that Mrs. Reed performs in the journals, although the focus on questions in this chapter may have created that impression. Shuy (this volume) shows that requests for information, opinions, or clarification in his classification system make up only 29% of the teacher's language functions in the dialogue journals. She is not only asking questions, but also reporting facts and opinions, thanking, evaluating, predicting, apologizing, and giving directives. Neither are questions the only strategy that Mrs. Reed uses to encourage the students to communicate in writing. Morroy (this volume) lists a number of other strategies that are employed as well. It is important to point this out, lest the reader be led to believe that dialogue journal writing consists of a student's writing about a topic and a teacher's asking questions about it and providing no information of his or her own. Such a pattern would quickly turn into another opportunity to quiz the student, similar to traditional classroom teaching, rather than a genuine exchange of ideas.

The first implication that can be drawn from the findings of this study is that dialogue journal writing provides the opportunity to depart from the interaction patterns that appear to prevail even in the language classroom. The questioning patterns found here more closely resemble those found in native speaker-nonnative speaker interactions, in which the purpose of the native speaker's questions is to open the door for increased participation by the nonnative speaker. As it is increasingly more clear that language acquisition occurs in the context of genuine communication rather than the drilling of forms, it is essential that opportunities for such communication exist in the language classroom, rather than the traditional Initiation-Reply-Feedback pattern that still dominates most classroom interaction. Once a teacher becomes accustomed to the kind of questioning patterns that grow naturally out of the one-to-one dialogue journal interaction, it might be possible to find ways to transfer them to other classroom activities as well.

Second, we have found some evidence here that the teacher's questions are adjusted to the language level of the student and change in nature as the student becomes more fluent. This adjustment to individual levels of language proficiency is very difficult, if not impossible, in a classroom in which one teacher speaks at one time to a group of students who may vary greatly in language ability. It may be that more avenues need to be explored for allowing more individualized, teacher-student interaction.

Third, it appears that the teacher's questions lead the students into more interaction by "teaching" them, through her responses to their questions and her questions, to respond to questions and to ask them, similar to a pattern that Goody (1978) found in mother-child interaction; the mother trained the child to ask questions by asking questions herself. We have seen for example, that Mrs. Reed's response rates to questions by all students is relatively high. By comparing the number of questions asked by Mrs. Reed and by each individual student (Figure 7.2), we can see that in almost all cases she closely matches their rate, but remains somewhat in the lead. Only with Michael and U Chal is there a different pattern. Michael and Mrs. Reed ask the same number of questions in the fall and winter. In the spring, when he asks a lot of questions, she asks fewer. When U Chal asks very few questions in the spring, she asks many more, maintaining a balance in the number of questions asked.

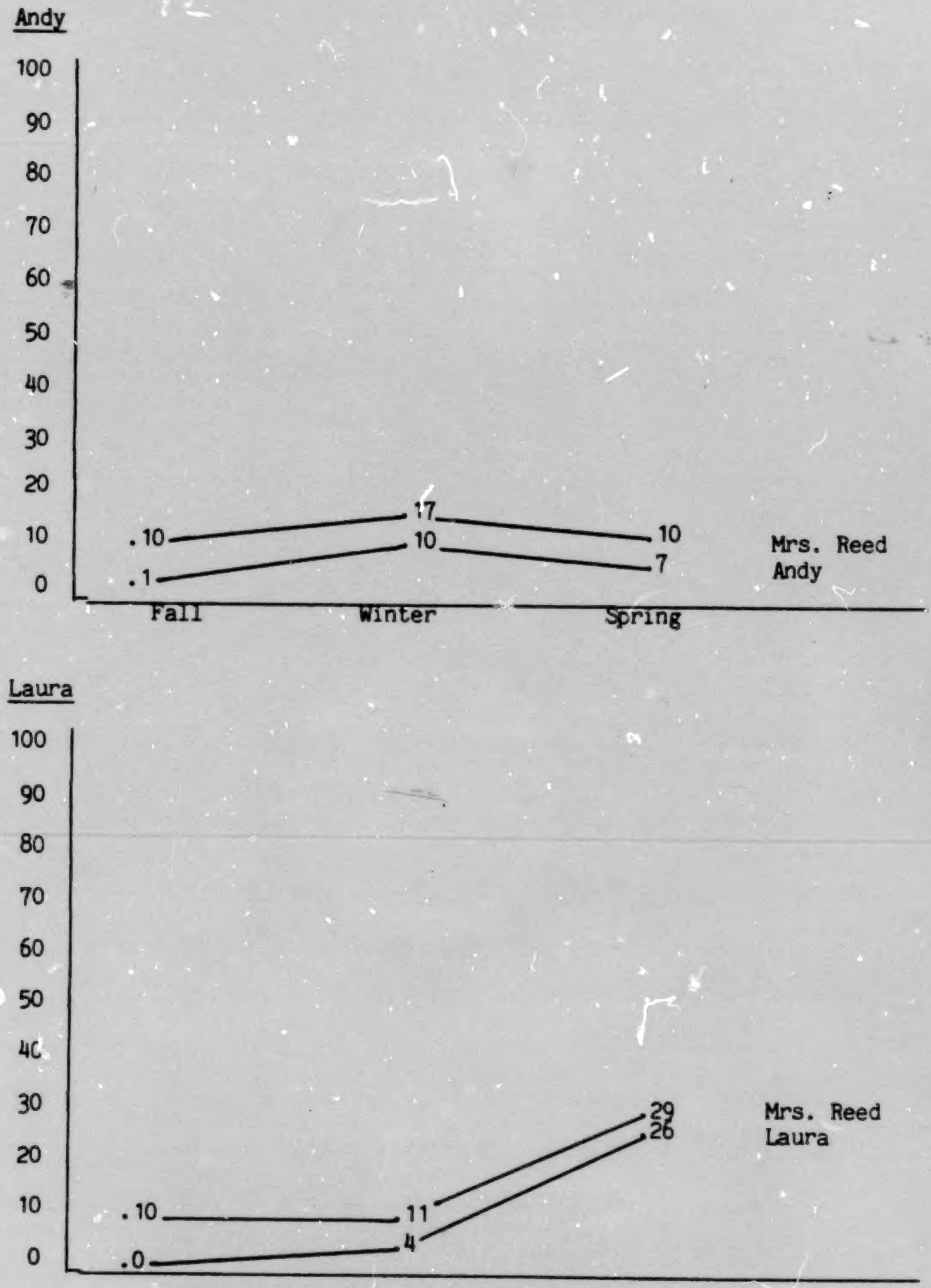
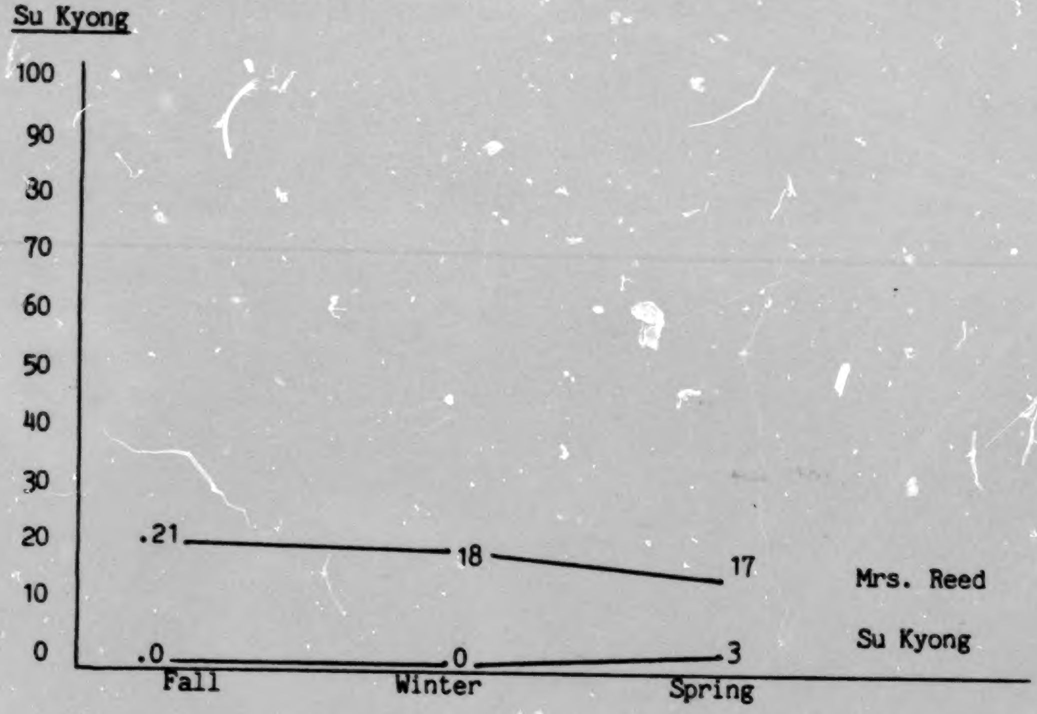


Figure 7.2. Number of teacher and student questions asked.



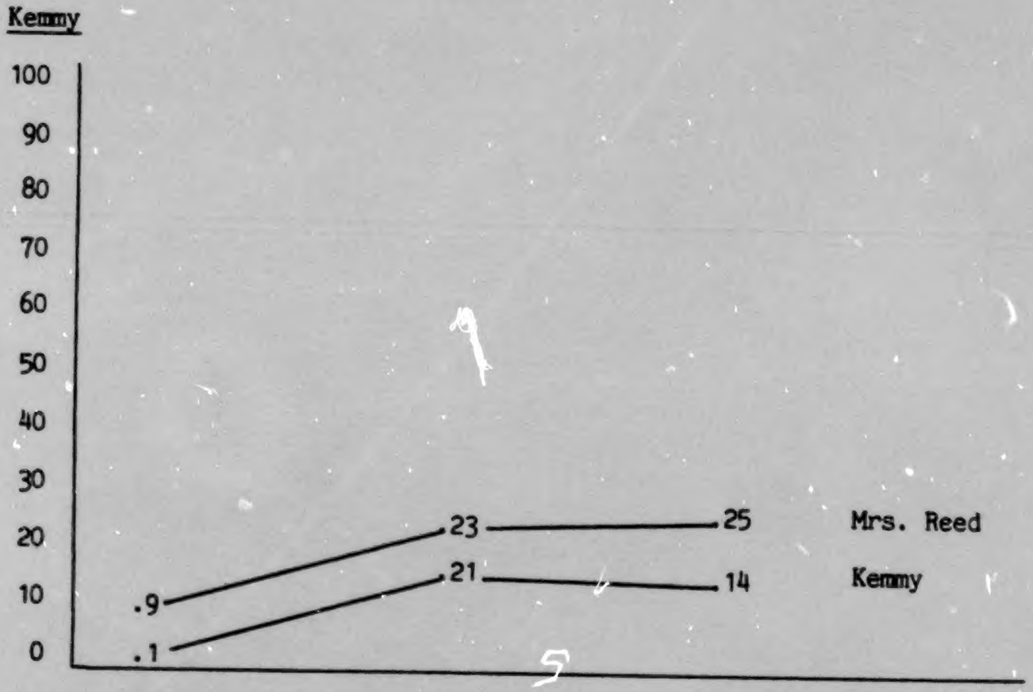


Figure 7.2, continued.

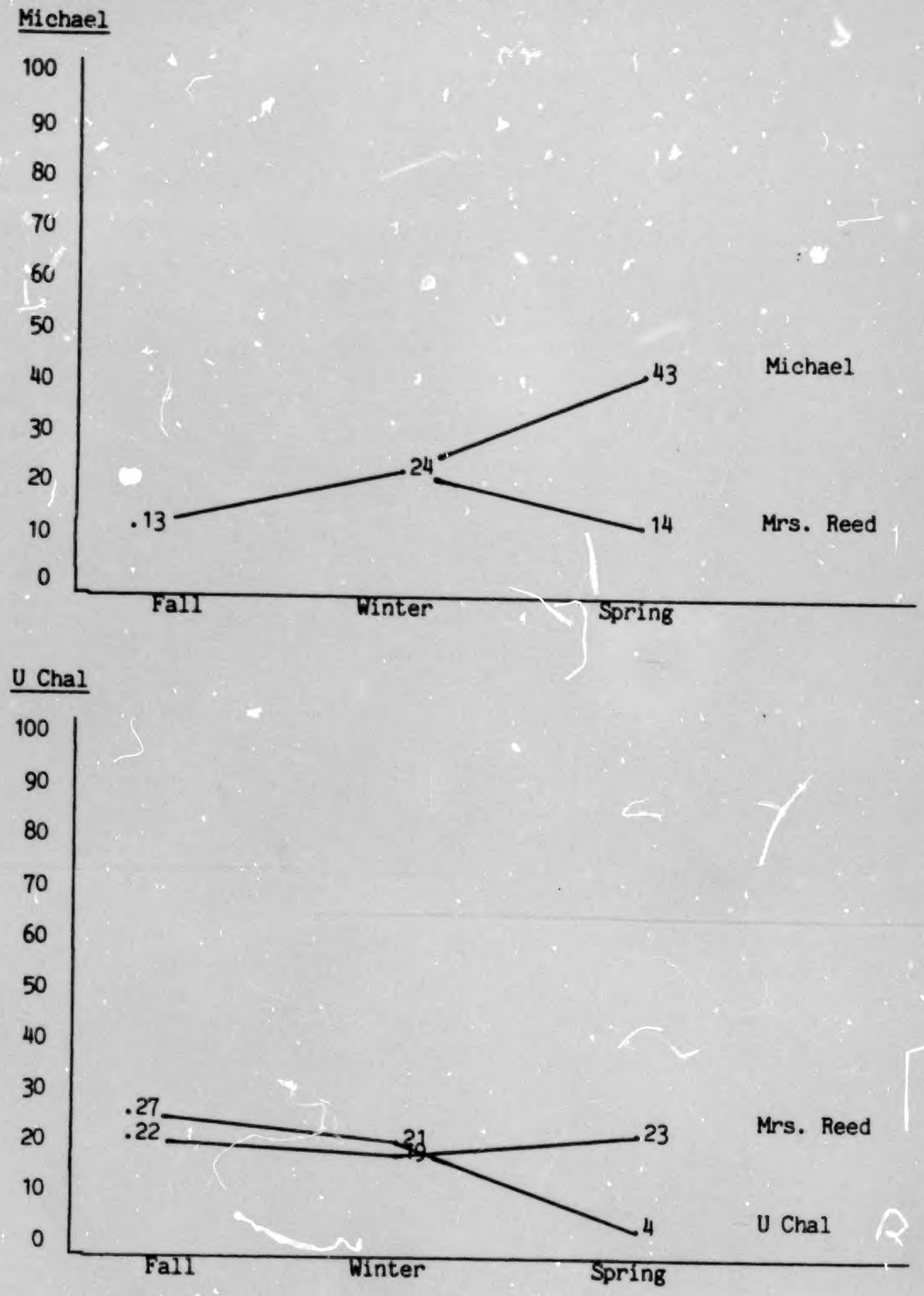


Figure 7.[illegible], continued.

Each student's increasing participation in the interaction, which takes place in part through the asking and answering of questions, allows them to gradually take steps toward becoming fluent communicators. At the very beginning stages of the journal interaction, they may have difficulty responding to her questions at all. Eventually they begin to respond to her questions and thus add more detail to their writing, until eventually they may begin to express themselves freely without the need for questions.

CHAPTER EIGHT

ANALYSIS OF GRAMMATICAL MORPHOLOGY IN THE DIALOGUE JOURNALS

Joy Kreeft

Introduction

In the two chapters in this section we shift our focus to the *forms* of English as they appear in the dialogue journals of five of the students in this study. The purpose of these two chapters is to document the acquisition, over the ten months of writing, of selected features of English grammatical morphology. There are several reasons for providing this documentation. First, as we read through the dialogue journals that serve as the data base for this study, it was clear to us and to Mrs. Reed that dramatic changes in form were occurring during the year in all of the journals. One example of such change is the difference in past tense marking in the following two narratives from Michael's journal. In May past tense is marked much more frequently than in October.

Oct. 3
S-10 Mrs. Reed, Today I *go* to math class Mrs. G- *give* test so I *mest* 3 and 1/2 not finish becuse time *is* up. I mean she *give* the 5. So I *finish* 2½. She *give* the math test *is* easy Mrs. Reed.

May 14
S-135 Yesterday I *want* home my mother *told* me to study the Language that you *gave* me to study I *did study* it . . .

Second, language theoreticians and empirical research indicate that when there is a focus on communication, as is the case in dialogue journal writing, acquisition of the forms of the language will naturally follow (Hatch, 1978b; Corsetti, 1979; Shuy, 1981a, for example). Since the dialogue journal interaction is an important means of authentic communication in English in this sixth grade classroom, we would expect to find evidence of the acquisition of the forms of English in the journals.

Third, in our conversations and workshops with ESL teachers, the question of form is always present. Although recently the major focus of attention of language teachers and researchers has shifted from grammatical to functional and communicative competence, practitioners are still interested in students' acquisition of language forms and want to know what kind of progress can be expected in the journals.

Therefore, it seemed imperative to document our initial impressions about the acquisition of form as a first step. We decided to analyze the patterns of morpheme use and changes over time in these patterns in the dialogue journals. Of course, morphology represents only one aspect of language form, and there are many other avenues that could be pursued in future studies of the acquisition of form. Morphology is a good starting place, however, because the frequent occurrence of morphemes makes quantification and therefore investigation of uniformity, variability, and change over time easier, and there already exists a large body of literature on grammatical morphology of learners of English as both a first and a second language to which the results from this study can be compared.

The questions that will be addressed in these two chapters are as follows:

1. Is the acquisition of the morphemes in question uniform among the individual students and among the three sample periods during the year?

2. Are the patterns of morpheme acquisition found in the dialogue journals similar to patterns found in previous studies of morpheme acquisition?

3. What are the linguistic factors that constrain morpheme production in this written medium?

4. Do these beginning ESL learners demonstrate increased proficiency over time on all of the morphemes studied?

This chapter will address questions 1 and 2. Patterns of morpheme use will be compared among the three sample periods, among the individual students, and with patterns found in previous studies of morphology in ESL. Chapter Nine consists of a detailed discussion of selected morphemes separately, for the purpose of addressing questions 3 and 4 and examining in more detail: important analytical issues that arise in the analysis of dialogue journal data; the importance of individual variation and language background in the patterns found; linguistic factors that contribute to the patterns found; and patterns of change over time.

Previous studies of grammatical morphology

The body of research that has informed many of the analytical methods used here is the "morpheme studies" of the 1970's. These studies grew out of a reaction to contrastive analysis theories that had originated around the 1940's and resultant pedagogical methods in language classrooms that concentrated on imitation and habit formation, and the desire to understand to what extent the underlying processes that guide the acquisition of English as a second language (L2) are similar to those processes that operate in the acquisition of English as a first language (L1). Brown's (1973) longitudinal study of three children learning English as L1 and his conclusion that these children acquired fourteen morphemes in a very similar order and the de Villiers' (1973) cross-sectional study of 21 children which yielded results very similar to Brown's spurred studies of morpheme use by learners of English as L2. Dulay and Burt (1972; 1973; 1974a; 1974b) conducted the first studies of second language learners and a plethora of studies followed, as researchers sought to discover whether a universal and invariant order for the accurate use of a set of morphemes would be found among ESL learners regardless of language background, age, previous exposure to English, learning environment, mode of production (spoken or written), or the researcher's data collection procedures (cf. Kreeft, 1984b for an extensive review of the "morpheme studies" and a discussion of the issues raised by these studies). In nearly all studies, a similar order was found among ESL learners. The investigation was extended to native English speakers with language disorders and an order was found that was similar to that found for first language learners.

During the same time period many criticisms were launched regarding the methods of data collection and the analytical procedures used in the morpheme studies as well as interpretations of the findings. However, with these criticisms in mind and after a review of all of the studies until 1977, Krashen (1977) proposed a "natural order" for morpheme acquisition for child and adult second language learners. This order is shown in Figure 8.1. The boxes demonstrate a descending order of accuracy, but the order of the morphemes within each box is variable.

Krashen agrees that although this order is not invariant it is "far from random" (p. 151), and that any production by a learner of

ESL, whether spoken or written, in which there are at least ten occasions for each morpheme to occur and in which the focus is on communication rather than on form, will result in a morpheme order similar to his "natural order." In certain test situations, where learners are focused on the form of English rather than on the message communicated, this order is disturbed somewhat, with certain morphemes with easily learned grammar rules—such as regular past and third singular and possessive -s—ranking very high (Houck, Robertson and Krashen, 1978; Brown, 1983).

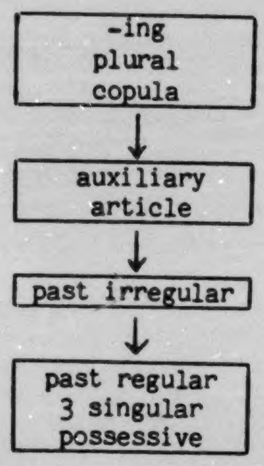


Figure 8.1. Krashen's "natural order" (1977, p. 149).

The Natural Order Hypothesis is presented as one of five within Krashen's theory of second language acquisition and reported as a fact about second language acquisition:

> One of the most exciting discoveries in language acquisition research in recent years has been the finding that the acquisition of grammatical structures proceeds in a predictable order. (Krashen, 1982, p. 12)

This discovery has been interpreted by some as an indication that all language learners, no matter what their first language is, organize and process a second language in a similar manner, so that second language learning processes can be said to be universal.

This study

In this part of the study of grammatical morphology in the dialogue journals the methods used in the morpheme studies are replicated for the purpose of presenting a general picture of patterns of morpheme use in the journals and comparing students' morpheme productions in these data to findings from these studies, as well as extending the range of the studies of morpheme acquisition to a new medium of communication--written, naturalistic interaction.

The data

The data are the dialogue journals of five of the six students who are the focus of this report--U Chal, Michael, Andy, Laura, and Su Kyong. Kemmy was not included in this analysis because he started the year at such a low level of writing proficiency that many of the morphemes appeared very late in the year, and because there is so much repetition of certain words and phrases in his journal that it is generally impossible to determine to what extent he has acquired the use of a morpheme and to what extent he has simply learned a particular spelling of a word or a particular phrase as a chunk.

Three samples of writing, each twenty interactions long, were taken from the fall, winter and spring (see Chapter One for details about the five students and the journal samples).[1]

Six verb-related and four noun-related morphemes were chosen for analysis:

Verb-related morphemes

Regular past	He played in the street.
Irregular past	He saw the school.
Progressive -ing	He is playing in the street.
Progressive BE	He is playing in the street.
Copula BE	He is a good student.
Third person singular, present tense	John likes school.

Noun-related morphemes

Regular plural	They are good students.
Possessive -'s	We went to Mary's house.
Definite article the	The teacher has a book.
Indefinite article a	

These particular morphemes were chosen because from an exploratory examination of Michael's journal it was clear that they are key elements in the process of morphological acquisition in the students' journals. Secondly, these morphemes have been the focus of many morpheme studies, so that comparisons could be made to previous research results in terms of the order and rate of development.

Methods of analysis

The analysis in this chapter consists of: determining the contexts in which each morpheme must occur (obligatory contexts); deciding whether the required morpheme is supplied or not supplied; and ranking the morphemes in relation to each other according to the frequency with which they are supplied in obligatory contexts. An "obligatory context" for a morpheme is created when a student writes a sentence or phrase in which that morpheme would be required. Following Brown (1973) "each obligatory context can be regarded as a kind of test item which the child passes by supplying the required morpheme or fails by supplying none or one that is not correct" (p. 255). For example, if a student writes, "Yesterday we go to the zoo" the past tense is required, but not supplied, on go (went). There are many pertinent issues related to the determination of obligatory contexts for morphemes in the naturally occurring, written production of second language learners, and these are discussed in detail in Kreeft (1984b).

In order to be included in the analysis in this chapter, a minimum of five occasions for the occurrence of a morpheme must occur. Thus, in some cases, no data are provided for a certain morpheme by an individual student. This does not mean that no potential instances for the use of the morpheme were found, but that there were fewer than five such instances. (Use of the morphemes, whether or not there are five instances, is discussed in the longitudinal analysis in Chapter Nine.)

A morpheme is considered supplied whether or not its form is correct. For example, in a sentence like, "They is going," the progressive auxiliary BE is considered supplied. After each context for a morpheme is scored as: morpheme supplied (1 point) or morpheme not supplied (0 points), the total number of times the morpheme is supplied is divided by the total number of times it should have been supplied, for a performance score, expressed as a percentage. These performance scores are ranked for the individual students and for the students as a group, for the three sample sections of the school year.

Findings

Table 8.1 shows the individual and group suppliance ratios, individual performance scores, the group performance score (Group Score), and the Group Mean for each of the morphemes studied. In the

Table 8.1. Individual and group accuracy percentages on nine morphemes.

Morphemes	U Chal		Laura		Su Kyong		Michael		Andy		Group Score		Group Mean
Fall													
ing	1/12	8.3	--	--	12/13	92.3	8/10	80.0	--	--	21/35	60.0	60.2
cop	18/18	100	18/20	90.0	17/23	73.9	34/36	94.4	44/45	97.8	131/142	92.3	91.2
aux	1/12	8.3	--	--	8/13	61.5	6/10	60.0	--	—	15/35	42.9	43.3
arts	59/68	86.8	8/23	34.8	13/20	65.0	43/51	84.3	24/35	68.6	147/197	74.6	67.9
plu	18/28	64.3	10/11	90.9	4/8	50.0	11/17	64.7	19/27	70.4	62/91	68.1	68.1
past irr	2/10	20.0	--	--	2/12	16.7	13/51	25.4	3/33	9.1	20/106	18.9	17.8
possess	--	--	--	--	--	--	0/7	0.0	0/5	0.0	0/12	0.0	0.0
3 sing	0/28	0.0	1/9	11.1	--	--	3/14	21.4	--	—	4/51	7.8	10.8
past reg	2/10	20.0	--	--	0/10	0.0	6/28	21.4	0/10	0.0	8/58	13.8	10.4
Winter													
ing	17/17	100	21/21	100	20/20	100	26/26	100	21/22	95.5	105/106	99.1	99.1
cop	21/21	100	48/50	96.0	21/26	80.8	59/64	92.2	202/212	95.3	351/373	94.1	92.9
aux	16/17	94.1	21/21	100	13/20	65.0	24/26	92.3	12/22	54.5	86/106	81.1	81.2
arts	88/95	92.6	57/57	100	22/39	56.4	132/144	91.7	21/103	20.4	320/438	73.1	72.2
plu	19/29	65.5	9/14	64.3	6/12	50.0	17/44	38.6	33/71	46.5	84/170	49.4	53.0
past irr	27/36	75.0	15/17	88.2	7/18	38.9	24/47	51.1	9/84	10.7	82/202	40.6	52.8
possess	--	--	--	--	--	--	1/12	8.0	12/21	57.1	13/33	39.4	32.6
3 sing	2/14	14.3	1/24	4.2	0/6	0.0	1/24	4.2	--	—	4/68	5.9	5.7
past reg	4/10	40.0	4/10	40.0	0/10	0.0	1/14	7.1	1/20	5.0	10/64	15.6	18.4
Spring													
ing	11/11	100	38/38	100	10/10	100	31/31	100	11/11	100	101/101	100	100
cop	26/16	100	54/54	100	33/35	94.3	89/93	95.7	149/153	97.4	351/361	97.2	97.5
aux	11/11	100	38/38	100	4/10	40.0	26/31	83.9	4/11	36.4	83/101	82.2	72.1
arts	64/65	98.5	49/49	100	28/35	80.0	131/172	76.2	33/73	45.2	305/394	77.4	80.0
plu	21/26	80.8	27/38	71.1	4/8	50.0	19/43	44.2	15/27	55.6	86/142	60.6	60.3
past irr	35/35	100	32/34	94.1	8/25	32.0	45/70	64.3	21/90	23.3	141/254	55.5	62.7
possess	3/6	50.0	2/6	33.3	--	--	0/13	0.0	14/17	82.4	19/42	45.2	41.4
3 sing	6/20	30.0	3/14	21.4	--	--	1/28	3.6	0/15	0.0	10/77	13.0	13.8
past reg	2/11	18.2	--	--	--	--	3/17	17.6	0/23	0.0	5/51	9.8	11.9

suppliance ratio for each morpheme by each student, the numerator represents the number of times the morpheme was supplied and the denominator represents the number of obligatory contexts for its occurrence. The group ratio is the sum of the individual ratios. The Group Score is obtained by dividing the numerator of the group ratio by the denominator and multiplying the group quotient by 100. The method follows Dulay and Burt (1974a), except that to obtain a Group Score, they included all subjects in the calculation, even if there was only one obligatory occasion for the use of a particular morpheme by that subject. Here, a minimum limit of at least five obligatory occasions for a morpheme to occur was imposed.

An individual performance score was calculated for each student's use of each morpheme by dividing the numerator of the individual ratio by the denominator and multiplying the quotient by 100. The Group Mean is the mean of the individual performance scores. This method follows Dulay and Burt exactly (except that, again, they included subjects with at least three occasions for occurrence of a morpheme).

Once group performance scores are obtained, they can be ranked from highest to lowest, based either on the group score or the group mean. Since there is little difference in rank orders by the two methods of calculation and since it is the Group Score that is reported in most rank order studies, this score is used to rank the morphemes. This ranking is shown in Table 8.2.

Fall	Winter	Spring
Group Score		
cop	ing	ing
arts	cop	cop
plu	aux	aux
ing	arts	arts
aux	plu	plu
past irr	past irr	past irr
past reg	possess	possess
3 sing	past reg	3 sing
possess	3 sing	past reg

Table 8.2. Group rank orders for morpheme suppliance by group score.

The rank orders are nearly identical in the winter and spring samples. Only the past regular and third singular exchange ranks in the spring, and these scores are based on very low numbers for each student, with no scores for some of the students on these morphemes. The similarity in rank orders among the three sample periods is reflected in a significant rank order correlation, as shown in Table 8.3. In the fall there are several differences in the rank ordering, but the rank order correlation with the winter and spring is still significant at the .05 level, showing that the rank orders in the fall are still similar to those in the winter and spring.

	Correlation coefficient	Significance level
Fall and Winter	0.75	p <.05
Fall and Spring	0.77	p <.05
Winter and Spring	0.98	p <.001

Table 8.3. Spearman rho correlations between morpheme ranks for three times during the year.

Since in the winter and spring a pattern for rank ordering seems to have stabilized and since an adequate number of instances of morpheme occurrence is available for most of the students in the spring, this sample was chosen for comparison with four studies of the morpheme production of adult ESL learners—in speech elicited by means of an instrument (the Bilingual Syntax Measure [Bailey, et al., 1974]); free speech (Krashen, et al., 1977); compositions written quickly and not edited (Houck, et al., 1978); and the same compositions, edited (Houck, et al., 1978)--and to Krashen's "natural order" (treating the morphemes as if they ranked in linear fashion). Table 8.4 shows the group rank orders along with group performance scores in each of the studies.

BSM-elicited[1]		Free speech[2]		Uncorrected transcripts[3]		Corrected transcripts[3]		"Natural order"[4]	Dialogue journals	
cop	84	cop	87	ing	97	cop	98	ing	ing	100
ing	83.7	ing	84	cop	97	ing	97	plu	cop	97.2
plu	79	plu	71	past irr	84	past irr	87	cop	aux	82.2
art	79	art	69	aux	82	aux	86	aux	art	77.4
aux	69	past irr	67	art	82	art	83	art	plu	60.6
past irr	54	past reg	64	possess	75	possess	80	past irr	past irr	55.5
3 sing	41	aux	56	plu	75	plu	80	past reg	possess	45.2
		3 sing	36	past reg	61	3 sing	76	3 sing	3 sing	13.0
				3 sing	60	past reg	61	possess	past reg	9.8

1. Bailey, Madden & Krashen, 1974. Reported in Krashen et al., 1977. p. 340.
2. Krashen, Houck, Giunchi, Bode, Birnbaum & Strei, 1977, p. 340.
3. Houck, Robertson & Krashen, 1978, p. 337.
4. Krashen, 1977, p. 149.

Table 8.4. Morpheme rank orders in oral and written productions.

Rank order correlations between the results in each study and this study show that group rank orders are similar, as shown in Table 8.5.

Study	Elicitation Method	Rank order correlation
Bailey, et al. 1974	BSM	0.82[b]
Krashen, et al. 1977	Free speech	0.68[c]
Krashen, et al. 1978	Uncorrected transcripts	0.89[a]
Krashen, et al. 1978	Corrected transcripts	0.87[a]
Krashen's "natural order"	----------	0.83[a]

a. $p<.01$, $n=9$

b. $p<.05$, $n=7$

c. $p=.06$, $n=8$

Table 8.5. Spearman rho correlations of dialogue journal writing with other studies of oral and written productions.

We have found that group rank orders are similar among the three sample periods of this study and between this study and others. The next question is whether the rank orders are similar among the individual students in this study. Following Andersen (1977; 1978) I used an implicational scale to compare morpheme ranks for individual students both with each other and with the group ranks.[2]

The implicational scales were created in the following way: a group rank order was found that best fits the rank order for each student, with the fewest individual rank deviations. A morpheme for a particular student that deviates from the established rank order is placed in parentheses. Table 8.6 shows the implicational scales for the three sample periods. We can see, for example, that plural ranks after articles for most of the students in the fall. For Laura and Andy it ranks before articles, so it is placed in parentheses. As it turned out, the best scale followed the Group Mean rank orders almost exactly, except that in the fall the ranks for articles and plural are switched. and in the spring the ranks for past irregular and plural are switched (these are marked with]). In both cases, the mean scores for the two morphemes are very close.

Although there are some deviations in each period, there is a great deal of similarity between group and individual ranks and among the individual students. I calculated a "coefficient of reproducibility" (following Guttman, 1944) for each implicational scale:3

Fall = .788; Winter = .878; Spring = .829.

Although Nie, et al. (1975) consider 90 percent or above a valid scale, Guttman points out that 85 percent is generally considered a sufficiently predictable scale. Thus, the scale for the winter sample can be considered valid and the spring sample is very close.

Mean		U Chal	Laura	Su Kyong	Michael	Andy
Fall						
cop	91.2	100	90.0	73.9	94.4	97.8
arts	67.9	86.8	34.8	65.0	84.3	68.6
plu	69.1	64.3	(90.9)	50.0	64.7	(76.5)
ing	60.2	8.3	—	(92.3)	(80.0)	—
aux	43.3	8.3	—	(61.5)	60.0	—
past irr	17.8	(20.0)	—	16.7	25.4	9.1
3 sing	10.8	0.0	—	—	21.4	—
past reg	10.4	(20.0)	—	0.0	21.4	0.0
possess	0.0	—	—	—	0.0	0.0
Winter						
ing	99.1	100	100	100	100	95.5
cop	92.9	100	(96.0)	80.8	92.2	95.3
aux	81.2	94.1	100	65.5	92.3	54.5
arts	72.2	92.6	100	56.4	91.7	20.4
past irr	52.8	75.0	88.2	38.9	51.1	10.7
plu	54.2	65.5	64.3	(50.0)	38.6	(52.5)
possess	32.6	—	—	—	8.0	(57.1)
past reg	18.4	40.0	40.0	0.0	4.2	—
3 sing	5.7	14.3	4.2	0.0	(7.1)	5.0
Spring						
ing	100	100	100	100	100	100
cop	97.5	100	100	94.3	95.7	97.4
arts	80.0	(98.5)	100	80.0	76.2	45.2
aux	72.1	100	100	40.0	(83.9)	36.4
past irr	62.7	100	94.1	32.0	64.3	23.3
plu	60.3	80.8	71.1	(50.0)	44.2	(55.6)
possess	41.4	50.0	33.3	—	0.0	(82.4)
3 sing	13.8	30.0	21.4	—	(3.6)	0.0
past reg	11.9	18.2	—	—	(17.6)	0.0

Table 8.6. Implicational scales for morpheme accuracy orders. Based on the group mean.

When the morphemes are separated into noun-related and verb-related morphemes, there is even more uniform ranking among students. Table 8.7 shows implicational scales for the six verb-related morphemes (the coefficients of reproducibility for the fall, winter, and spring are .857, .931, and .963 respectively). The number of deviations decreases in all three periods, and Su Kyong's and Andy's morphemes rank like those of the other students.

Mean		U Chal	Laura	Su Kyong	Michael	Andy
Fall						
cop	95.8	100	90.0	73.9	94.4	97.8
ing	40.9	8.3	—	(92.3)	80.0	—
aux	31.8	8.3	—	61.5	60.0	—
past irr	19.1	(20.0)	—	16.7	25.4	9.1
3 sing	19.0	0.0	—	—	21.4	—
past reg	16.7	(20.0)	—	0.0	21.4	0.0
Winter						
ing	99.1	100	100	90.5	100	95.5
cop	92.9	100	96.0	80.8	92.2	95.3
aux	81.2	94.1	100)	71.4	92.3	54.5
past irr	52.8	75.0	88.2	40.0	51.1	10.7
past reg	18.4	40.0	40.0	0.0	4.2	—
3 sing	5.7	14.3	4.2	0.0	(7.1)	5.0
Spring						
ing	100	100	100	100	100	100
cop	97.5	100	100	94.3	95.7	97.4
aux	72.1	100	100	40.0	83.9	36.4
past irr	62.7	100	94.1	32.0	64.3	23.3
3 sing	13.8	30.0	21.4	—	3.6	0.0
past reg	11.9	18.2	—	—	(17.6)	0.0

Table 8.7. Implicational scales for verb-related morphemes.

Table 8.8 shows the implicational scales for the three noun-related morphemes. Here, only Andy differs, his scores for plural and possessive ranking higher than those of the other students. For the other students, a group rank order can be established that reflects individual performance (the coefficients of reproducibility for the fall, winter, and spring are .833, .833, and .857 respectively).

Mean		U Chal	Laura	Su Kyong	Michael	Andy
Fall						
arts	67.9	86.8	34.8	65.0	84.3	68.6
plu	69.3	64.3	(90.9)	50.0	64.7	(76.5)
possess	0.0	—	—	—	0.0	0.0
Winter						
arts	72.2	92.6	100	56.4	91.7	20.4
plu	54.2	65.5	64.3	50.0	38.6	(52.5)
possess	32.6	—	—	—	8.0	(57.1)
Spring						
arts	80.0	98.5	100	80.0	76.2	45.2
plu	60.3	80.8	71.1	50.0	44.2	(55.6)
possess	41.4	50.0	33.3	—	0.0	(82.4)

Table 8.8. Implicational scales for noun-related morphemes.

Based on the implicational scales, a Group Accuracy Order can be established. I did this by using both the Group Mean and the order that resulted in the best implicational scale in the winter and spring samples. Thus, progressive -ing, for example, ranks before copula in the Group Mean (Table 8.6) and on the implicational scale in the winter and spring, so that -ing is ranked before copula in the Group Accuracy Order. On the other hand, past regular ranks before third singular in the Group Mean and on the implicational scale in the winter, but after third singular in the spring. Therefore, past regular and third singular are not ranked in relation to each other in the Group Accuracy Order.

The rank order for all nine morphemes together is shown below, the morphemes ranked from left to right. The morphemes that are listed together are not ranked in relation to each other.

Higher rank   Lower rank

aux   past irr   past reg

ing > cop > arts > plu > possess > 3 sing

The order is similar to Krashen's proposed "natural order," except that Krashen places plural higher than it ranks in this study:

ing   aux   past reg

plu > arts > past irr > 3 sing

cop   possess

(Krashen, natural order, 1977)

When verb phrase morphemes are grouped, the implicational scale shows more uniformity among students, the order being:

past reg

ing > cop > aux > past irr > 3 sing

This is similar to the "natural order" (the only difference being that cop ranks with ing in the natural order).

The noun phrase morphemes rank uniformly for everyone except Andy:

arts > plu > possess

The "natural order" is:

plu > arts > possess

Conclusions

In this chapter we have been able to identify a pattern for morpheme suppliance in obligatory contexts in the dialogue journal writing of five students from four different language backgrounds—2 Koreans, 1 Burmese, 1 Italian, and 1 Korean/Portuguese—and with differing degrees of English proficiency.

In response to question 2 posed at the beginning of this chapter, we have found that the rank order for morpheme suppliance is similar for three sample periods during the year, although the greatest similarity is evident between the winter and spring samples. Individual students' performances on the morphemes are also quite similar, with considerable variation only by Andy, on the noun-related morphemes.

In response to question 3, the order found in the winter and spring samples is very similar to that found in other ESL studies of spoken productions and written compositions and to Krashen's "natural order."

Thus, it appears that teachers can expect to find some consistent patterns for morpheme suppliance in the dialogue journal writing of their students. These patterns will probably not emerge immediately with beginning ESL learners who have very limited proficiency with English, but will appear eventually (in the fall sample in this study, when these students had just begun learning English, there were few occassions for the occurrence of some of the morphemes and the rank orders were slightly different from those in the winter and spring samples). Certain morphemes, such as progressive -ing and auxiliary, copula, and irregular past tense, will tend to be supplied frequently in obligatory contexts, while others, such as third singular and possessive -s and the regular past morpheme will be supplied infrequently relative to other morphemes.

It also appears that students' written productions in dialogue journals may provide an adequate picture of their competence with English in non-test situations, and thus serve as additional data for assessing students' English proficiency in informal contexts. Although we have made no comparison here between these students' dialogue journal writing and their speech or their written compositions, we have found similarities in patterns of morpheme use between the dialogue journal writing of these students and the speech and compositions of other ESL learners. Although we have focused only on morphemes, a small part of total language proficiency, the similarities that we found for morphemes are probably indicative of similarities in other aspects of language proficiency as well. Thus, it may even be possible to forego some tests that are given to determine proficiency with English form and look to dialogue journal data instead.

We must remind ourselves at this point, however, that the analysis presented in this chapter has yielded a very general picture of patterns for morpheme use in the journals. We have looked only at morpheme use in obligatory contexts and not at overgeneralizations of the morphemes to contexts in which they are not required. We have not considered possible factors influencing the use of the morphemes, and we have not examined the possible effect of first language background on morpheme production. In Chapter Nine a more detailed analysis of a subset of the morphemes analyzed here is performed in order to examine these issues more carefully. Also, questions about the methods of analysis used in previous studies of grammatical morphology are raised, as it soon became clear during the analysis of these data that some of these methods are not adequate for a complete understanding of the morpheme acquisition of beginning ESL learners.

Notes to Chapter Eight

[1] At the beginning of the study the morpheme analyses presented here were performed by dividing Michael's whole journal into three equal sections and analyzing each whole section. Then a sample of twenty interactions was extracted from each section. When it was determined that the twenty-interaction samples were representative of the whole section, only the samples were analyzed in the rest of the journals. In Chapter Nine, some of the findings from the analysis of Michael's whole journal will be presented.

[2] The implicational scales used here differ somewhat from Andersen's. Andersen's implicational scale, shown below, is designed to be used with large numbers of subjects. It gives the percentage of subjects who use each morpheme correctly at different levels of accuracy (100%, 90-100%, 80-100%, etc.) and establishes a group accuracy order on the basis of these percentages rather than on the basis of the group mean. The morphemes in question rank from highest to lowest (from left to right), based on the percentage of subjects that attain each level of accuracy. In this way, Andersen is able to establish group rank orders with what he calls the Group Range method, rather than the Group Mean or Group Score methods used in other studies and used so far in this study.

	COP (n=83)	AUX (n=83)	ING (n=83)	PAST IRR (n=72)	PAST REG (n=40)	HAVE* (n=70)	3 SING (n=73)	PAST PART** (n=70)
90% CRITERION (90-100%)	94	53	48	31	20	11	6	6
80% CRITERION (80%-100%)	98	66	61	45	25	14	13	7
70% CRITERION (70-100%)	99	70	66	53	32.5	17	16	8

* I have lived...
** I have lived...

Illustration of "Group Ranges". Percent of Subjects Using Eight Verb-Related Morphemes Correctly at Different Levels of Accuracy (Andersen, 1977, p. 51).

Since my study is based on only five subjects, I used each subject's percentage score on the use of each morpheme as the basis for the scale rather than the percent of subjects using each morpheme at each level.

[3] This was suggested by Andersen (1978). The formula, first used by Gutmann (1944), is:

$$R = 1 - \frac{\text{no of errors}}{((\text{no. of rows})(\text{no. of columns})) - \text{no. of empty cells}}$$

For Period 3, the formula would be: $R = 1- \frac{7}{(9X5)-4} = .829$

CHAPTER NINE

LONGITUDINAL ANALYSIS OF SELECTED MORPHEMES

Joy Kreeft

Introduction

The cross-sectional analysis of the suppliance of ten morphemes in obligatory contexts, in Chapter Eight, has provided quantitative information about how these morphemes rank in relation to each other during three periods of the school year. It has shown that morpheme rank orders agree significantly with those found in other studies and are quite uniform among individual students during the last two sample periods. However, this analysis has provided little information about the processes involved in the students' acquisition of each of the morphemes as evidenced in their dialogue journal writing. The longitudinal analyses in this chapter involve more qualitative, microanalyses of the morphemes for the purposes of providing a comprehensive description of morpheme acquisition in the dialogue writing.

The following morphemes will be discussed, a subset of those covered in Chapter Eight (but cf. Kreeft, 1984b for a discussion of all of the morphemes): progressive auxiliary and -ing, copula, regular and irregular past tense, articles, and possessive -'s. Each morpheme is discussed separately, and the following issues are addressed:

1. General patterns of morpheme use in the dialogue journal writing of each of the five students, including suppliance of the morpheme in contexts in which it is required, as well as overgeneralizations to contexts where it is not required.

2. Individual variation in the use of the morpheme and possible reasons for the variation.

3. Linguistic factors that constrain morpheme production in the written medium.

4. Change over the ten months' time of dialogue journal writing in the use of the morphemes.

Because this is the first study of features of grammatical morphology in dialogue journal writing, the procedures used in the analysis of each morpheme are also discussed. It is hoped that this discussion will prove useful not only as background information about how the findings presented here were obtained, but will also serve as a guide to others interested in studying the acquisition of grammatical morphology in dialogue journal writing or in other kinds of data.

VERB PHRASE MORPHEMES

1. Progressive

The majority of studies of morpheme acquisition in English as a second language have found that the two progressive morphemes, inflectional suffix -ing (ING) and auxiliary BE (AUX) are present in obligatory contexts with a high frequency relative to other verb phrase morphemes, and that ING is present more frequently than AUX. As we saw in Chapter Eight, these patterns are confirmed in these dialogue journal data when the methods of analysis used in previous studies are replicated. In this section, we will explore in more detail the factors that must be taken into consideration in the study of progressive morphemes. It will be shown that:

° ING is not necessarily supplied more frequently than AUX by ESL learners. When ambiguous progressive constructions are included in the analysis, it appears that AUX is supplied before ING by some of the students in the early stages of acquisition;

° A truer picture of the patterns for progressive formation can be obtained when the two morphemes that form the progressive are considered together rather than separately.

First, details pertinent to the procedures used for analysis will be discussed.

Details of the analysis

Potential progressive constructions are included in the analysis when the -ing form should, in the context, be attached to the main finite verb ("We are looking at the newspaper." "We are going to do art."), and the auxiliary is a form of BE. Thus gerundive forms, passives, and progressives in which the auxiliary is a verb other than BE are excluded.

All auxiliaries, whether contractible ("We're going.") or uncontractible ("Are we going?" "We were going."), whether in statements or subject-verb inversion questions, are considered together. Full credit is given for any AUX supplied in an obligatory context, whether or not person, number, and/or tense are correct. Thus, in constructions such as, "Yesterday Im writing . . ." and "Yesterday you was writing," full credit is given for AUX.

Constructions in which another auxiliary is substituted for BE, such as, "How do you going to pick the winner?", are infrequent in these data and excluded from the analysis.

Presence of AUX and ING in progressive contexts

The major analytical issue that arises in the study of the progressive morphemes in the dialogue journal writing of beginning ESL learners is the difficulty in determining whether certain structures provide the context for the progressive. For example, the following structures were found in the journals:

1. I am writing in my journal. (AUX + Verb + ING)
2. I writing in my journal. (Verb + ING)
3. I am write in my journal. (AUX + Verb)
4. I write in my journal. (Verb)

Numbers 1 and 2 are pretty clearly progressive structures, since -ing is present. But in numbers 3 and 4, if nothing in the surrounding context provides more information, it is not clear whether these are progressive structures or not. In both cases, both the simple present (or past) and the progressive are possible.

Sometimes the linguistic context helps to clear up the ambiguity. For example, sometimes the teacher asks a question and the student responds in a form very similar to the question:

> Teacher: What *are* you *doing*?[1]
>
> Student: I *do* my spelling.

At times the student imitates the teacher:

> Teacher: You *are doing* very well.
>
> Student: Why do you say I *do* well?

At times the student's own entry makes it clear that the progressive is necessary:

> The time *is go* fast because 1 second to 1 minute to 1 hour 1 day to 1 week to 1 month to 1 year that why time *is going* too fast.

To be parallel with the second progressive, *is go* should also be in the progressive.

However, the linguistic context does not always clear up ambiguities. One exchange goes as follows:

> Student: The fox ring the bell, and the little girls *is open* the door . . .
>
> Teacher: I wonder how the little girls feel when they *are opening* the door!

The teacher models the progressive in her reply, but we do not know whether the student has meant to write the progressive or the simple past ("The fox rang the bell, and the little girls *opened* the door."). Of course, the question of ambiguity does not arise in *going to + infinitive* constructions, which are expressed in the following constructions in the journals:

1. We are going to have art tomorrow. (Referred to henceforth as AUX + Verb + ING)
2. We going to have art tomorrow. (Verb + ING)
3. We are go to have art tomorrow. (AUX + Verb)
4. We go to have art tomorrow. (Verb)

In each case, a progressive is clearly intended, and therefore AUX and ING are required.

In this study, ambiguous progressive constructions are dealt with in the following ways:

1) Apart from going to + infinitive constructions, a verb alone, with no inflections (either AUX or ING) is not considered as a potential progressive. For example, one student writes:

> Today math time Lisa bother me everytime that's why I not talking to her.

She could mean "Lisa was bothering me today," "Lisa bothers me everytime in math," or "Lisa bothered me . . . ".

2) Decisions about AUX + Verb constructions, which can also be ambiguous, are made based on the context:

° Instances in which it is clear from the context that the progressive is required are counted as obligatory contexts for AUX and ING.

> I'm go to finish my homework.
> [I'm going to finish . . .]

° Instances in which it is not clear whether the progressive or some other verb form is intended are considered ambiguous:

> Tony have beg cut in the pans. Am not tell my friends but gest tell you.
> [I am not telling . . ./I am not going to tell . . ./I did not tell . . .]

° Instances in which it is clear from the context that a progressive form is not possible are considered overgeneralizations of the AUX + Verb construction:

> Yesterday night is telephone message the my grandmother is die that is bad message and sad message.

In this example, the rest of the context makes it clear that his grandmother had died.

The following sample from Michael's journal, in which he recounts the plot of a story that he had read, "The Clever Fox," shows how he uses the AUX + Verb construction:

> . . . she [the woman in the story] open the bag, and then bee is get [was getting] away, and the hen is eat [ate] the bee, and the fox was come [came] back the woman said "the bee got away, and my hen was eat [ate] the bee" . . . . Next he is go [went] to the another house. The fox ring the bell, and the little girls is open [opened] the door . . . and he open the bag and the big dog is come [came] out, and the fox is cry [cried] and run away.

Although an AUX with the verb may be an indication of the progressive, in this example progressive is possible only in the first instance (". . . the bee was getting away). In all of the others, the verb should be in the simple past.

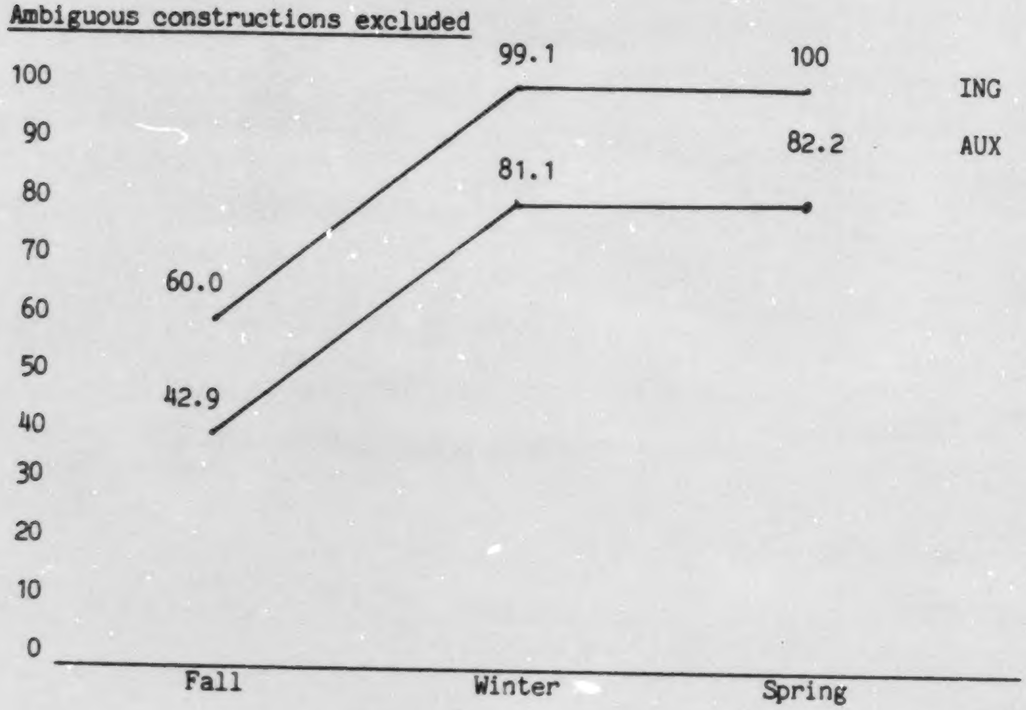
The important point here is that AUX + Verb is a frequently occurring form in some of the journals. It is often used in contexts where progressive is possible and sometimes used in contexts where progressive is obligatory. Thus, it appears that for some ESL learners it is AUX + Verb which marks the progressive in the early stages rather than VERB + ING, with AUX appearing later. This process may have been obscured in previous studies of morpheme acquisition in ESL, in which only a VERB + ING construction is considered a context for AUX.

Table 9.1 shows the scores for AUX and ING suppliance in all contexts in which progressive is possible, including ambiguous AUX + Verb constructions (such as "I am go . . ."). What we find is that when ambiguous AUX + Verb constructions are included in the analysis, ING is

ING	Fall		Winter		Spring	
U Chal	1/13	7.7	17/17	100	11/1	100
Laura	3/4	7.5	21/22	94.4	38/39	97.4
Su Kyong	12/19	53.2	20/26	76.9	10/13	76.9
Michael	8/14	57.1	26/28	31/32	96.9	
Andy	0/18	0.0	21/39	56.8	12/17	70.6
TOTAL	24/68	35.3	105/132	79.5	102/112	91.1
AUX						
U Chal	2/13	15.4	16/17	94.1	11/11	100
Laura	2/4	50.0	22/22	100	39/39	100
Su Kyong	14/19	73.7	19/26	73.1	7/13	53.8
Michael	10/14	71.4	26/28	92.9	27/32	84.4
Andy	18/18	100	27/37	73.0	9/17	52.9
TOTAL	46/68	67.6	110/130	84.6	93/112	83.0

Table 9.1. Progressive morphemes. Including ambiguous AUX + Verb.

supplied more frequently than AUX only in the spring sample. When these ambiguous instances are excluded from the analysis, as was the case in Chapter Eight, ING appears to be consistently more frequently than AUX. Both patterns are shown in Figure 9.1.



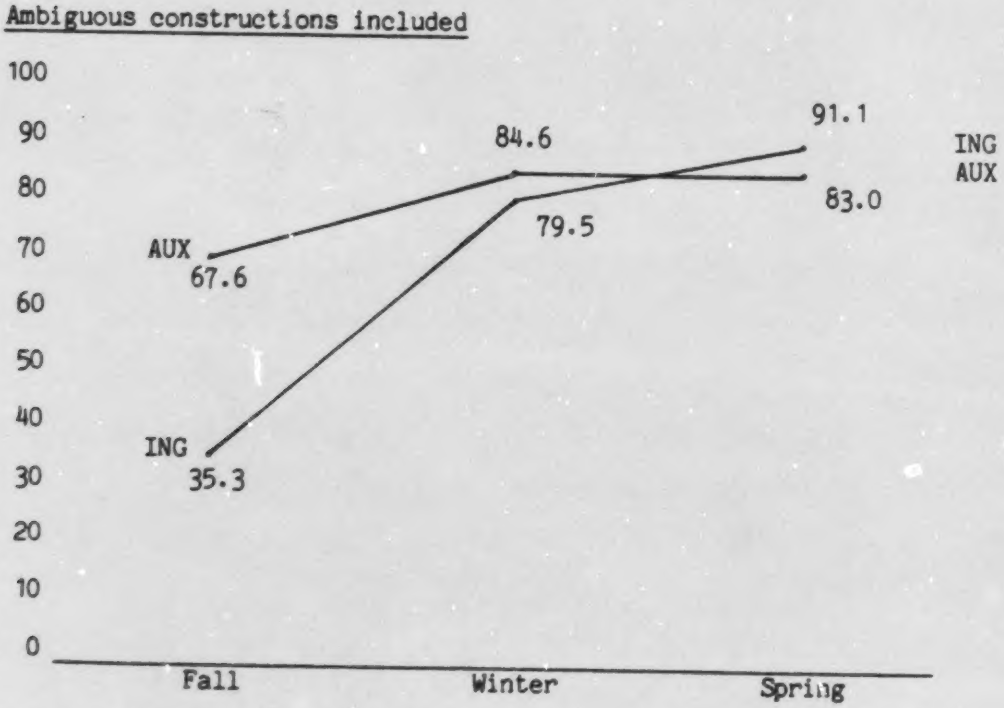


Figure 9.1. Progressive morphemes by two methods of calculation. Group scores.

The finding that AUX is supplied more frequently than ING confirms Andersen (1977), who found in the written compositions of college students that more of his subjects used AUX + Verb without ING to express the progressive than Verb + ING without AUX. For his subjects, it was the free morpheme AUX that was used to indicate progressive before the bound morpheme ING (p. 62).

Andersen (1977) suggests an alternative method for analyzing the incipient stages of progressive formation. He argues that rather than treating AUX and ING as separately occurring morphemes, it is more informative to note the occurrence of all of the possible forms that are used by ESL learners to express the progressive. This analysis was performed on the dialogue journal data. Table 9.2 shows the four verb forms used in the dialogue journal samples and the frequency of each form in contexts in which it is possible that the progressive is being used (as before, almost all of the AUX + Verb constructions are ambiguous).

Several details about this table are pertinent: While patterns differ for individual students, three of the forms are used by all of the students at various times during the year, and in the fall and winter samples, AUX + Verb occurs more frequently than Verb + ING. As the year progresses, there is a general decrease in frequency of AUX + Verb and increase in the use of AUX + Verb + ING. U Chal and Laura have similar patterns for progressive formation. They begin to use AUX and ING together, and use it almost exclusively by the winter sample, as shown in Figure 9.2. On the other hand, Andy, Michael, and Su Kyong

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Table 9.2. Verb forms used to express the progressive.

	AUX + Verb + ING (I am going.)						Verb + ING (I going.)						AUX + Verb (I am go.)						Verb alone (I go to do...)			
	Fall	%	Winter	%	Spring	%	Fall	%	Winter	%	Spring	%	Fall	%	Winter	%	Spring	%	Fall	%	Winter	Spring
W Choi	1/13	7.7	16/17	94.1	11/11	100	0/13	0.0	1/17	5.9	0/11	0.0	1/13	7.7	0/17	0.0	0/11	0.0	11/13	84.6	-	-
Laura	1/4	25.0	21/22	95.5	38/39	97.4	2/4	50.0	0/22	0.0	0/39	0.0	1/4	25.0	1/22	4.5	1/39	2.6	-		-	-
Michael	4/14	28.6	24/28	85.7	26/32	81.3	4/14	28.6	2/28	7.1	5/32	15.6	6/14	42.9	2/28	7.1	1/32	3.1	-		-	-
Andy	0/18	0.0	11/37	29.7	4/17	23.5	0/18	0.0	10/37	27.0	8/17	47.1	18/18	100	16/37	43.2	5/17	29.4	-		-	-
Su Kyong	7/19	36.8	13/26	50.0	4/13	30.8	5/19	26.3	7/26	26.9	6/13	46.2	7/19	36.8	6/26	23.1	3/13	23.1	-		-	-
TOTAL	13/68	19.1	85/130	65.4	83/112	74.1	11/68	16.2	20/130	15.4	19/112	17.0	33/68	48.5	25/130	19.2	10/112	8.9	11/13	84.6	-	-

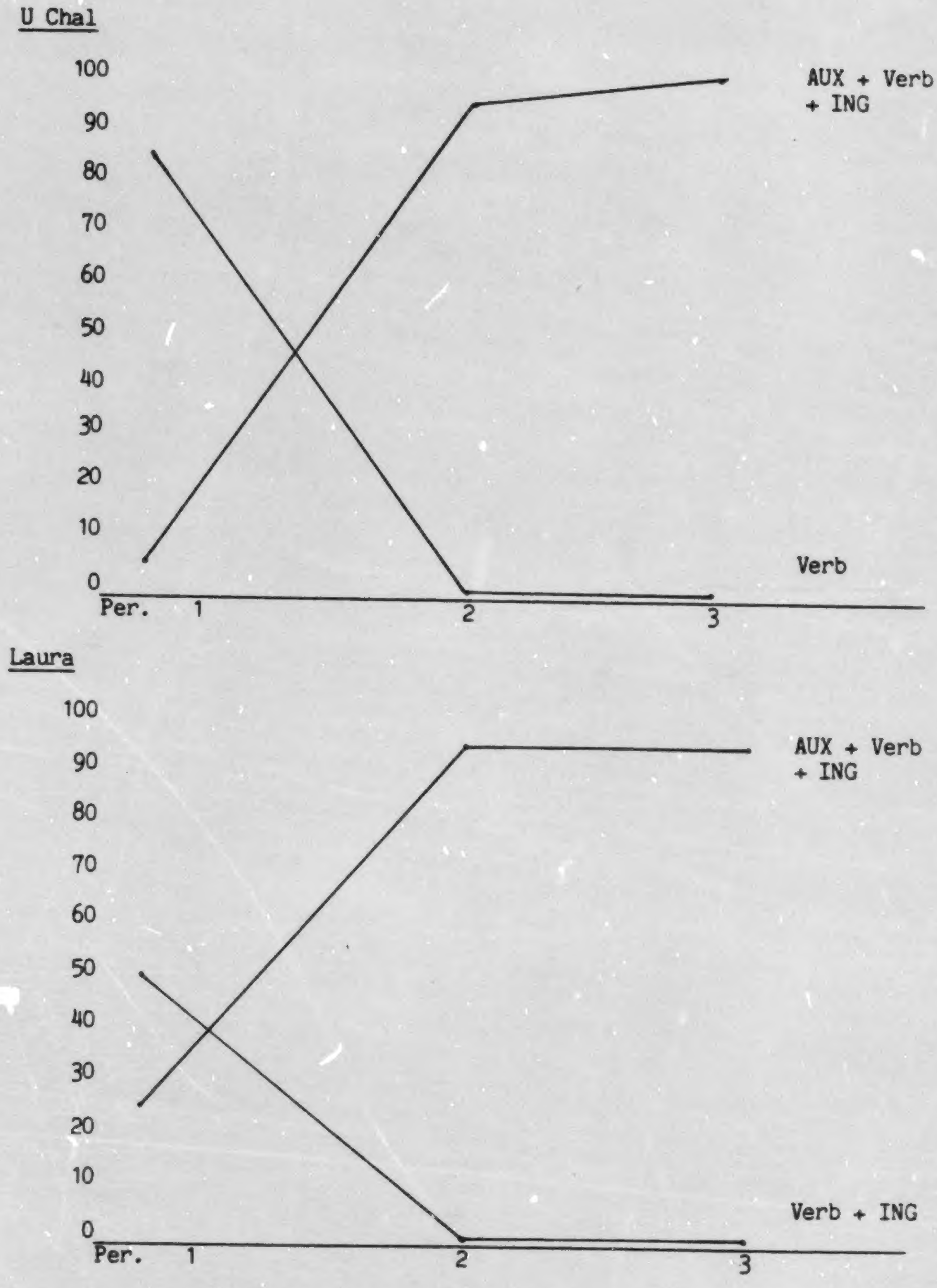


Figure 9.2. Verb forms used to express the progressive. Laura and U Chal.

have a high frequency of AUX + Verb at the beginning of the year and Verb + ING is present more frequently only in the spring sample.

There are two findings in this analysis that are relevant to a study of the acquisition of progressive morphemes. First, suppliance scores for AUX and ING may depend on the researcher's perception of contexts for their use. While ING presence does indeed create an obligatory context for AUX, many ambiguous AUX + Verb constructions were found in these data. These may also be progressive constructions. In these cases AUX presence may have created an obligatory context for ING rather than the other way around. This finding calls into question previous conclusions that ING ranks before AUX.

Second, when we look at the four constructions used in contexts where progressive is possible (AUX + Verb + ING; AUX + VERB; Verb + ING; Verb alone) we find that two of the subjects supply AUX and ING together. The other three supply AUX first, and ING appears later. This finding supports Meisel, Clahsen, and Pieneman's (1981) argument that while there may be certain universal patterns in second language development (such as early use of progressive auxiliary and _-ing_ relative to other morphemes), it is still necessary to distinguish between "different groups of learners who may follow different paths on their way to their variety of the target language" (p. 110).

Factors influencing auxiliary suppliance

Up to now, we have treated the progressive AUX as a single category, disregarding possible influences on its use. Previous studies have found variability in AUX suppliance as a result of two factors--the allomorph of BE and the type of progressive construction. These two factors were investigated in these data as well.

Allomorph of BE

Progressive BE has three forms in the present tense, related to the verb subject:

I	*am*
he, she, it, singular noun phrase	*is*
you, we, they, plural noun phrase	*are*

Both Hakuta (1976) and Schumann (1978) found that variability of AUX presence in their data depended on the allomorph of BE—*am* and *is* were supplied more often than *are*. Hakuta suggests that the infrequent use of *are* may be due to the high frequency of subject-verb inverted questions with *we* and *you* as subject addressed to the learner. The AUX is moved out of its normal position to sentence-initial position, and thus may not be as noticeable ("*Are* you gonna make that?" "What *are* we gonna do?"). He also notes that in some colloquial speech the AUX is often not present at all in inverted questions ("You gonna make that?").

In the three dialogue journals in which AUX suppliance is variable, there is variation related to the allomorph (only instances where ING was already present are considered here). Table 9.3 gives percentages for AUX suppliance for Michael, Su Kyong, and Andy (the totals for Michael come from his whole journal, rather than the sample periods). *Am* is always present for Michael. Early in the year, Su Kyong treats *Im* as a single unit, writing *Im* every time that I is the subject of a sentence. As she later begins to write *I am*, her score for AUX suppliance with *I* as subject decreases. Andy shows no particular pattern for the use of *am* and *is*, but for all three students percentages

	Fall		Winter		Spring	
Michael						
am	15/15	100	18/18	100	26/26	100
is	6/8	75.0	22/25	88.0	18/20	90.0
are	1/10	14.0	27/36	75.0	15/29	51.7
Su Kyong						
am	7/7	100	7/9	77.8	2/3	67.0
is	1/6	16.7	6/9	66.7	2/4	50.0
are	-		0/2	0.0	0/3	0.0
Andy						
am	*		2/3	66.7	1/2	50.0
is			10/13	76.9	2/4	50.0
are			0/6	0.0	1/6	16.7

* There are no instances of Verb + ING in Period 1 in Andy's journal.

Table 9.3. AUX suppliance by allomorph.

for are suppliance are low, and only Michael shows an increase over time in the use of are. Thus, in these written data, previous findings about variability related to the allomorph of BE in speech have been confirmed.

Progressive construction

There is evidence in the journals that AUX suppliance also depends on the type of progressive construction--the present progressive ("We are going to the zoo.") or be going to + infinitive ("We are going to go to the zoo tomorrow"). Although small numbers in most of the student samples analyzed prohibit study of the differences for all of the students, a pattern is evident in U Chal's and Michael's journals. In U Chal's journal in the fall, only one present progressive occurs, and both AUX and ING are present (". . . and it is raining."). All other eleven instances are going to + infinitive, and for all of these neither AUX nor ING is present (e.g., "Our Korean group go to report

. . .). In the winter and spring, both AUX and ING are supplied for both progressives, except for one instance of *going to + infinitive*, in which AUX is not present ("We *going* to do . . .").

In Michael's journal, present/past progressive and *going to + infinitive* constructions were analyzed for the entire year. Table 9.4 and Figure 9.3 show that the presence of AUX in *going to + infinitive* constructions is consistently less frequent than with the present or past progressive.

	Fall		Winter		Spring	
Past/Present	15/20	75.0	38/40	95.0	34/37	92.0
Going to + infinitive	7/13	54.0	29/39	74.0	25/34	74.0

Table 9.4. AUX suppliance in context of Verb + ING. Michael's whole journal.

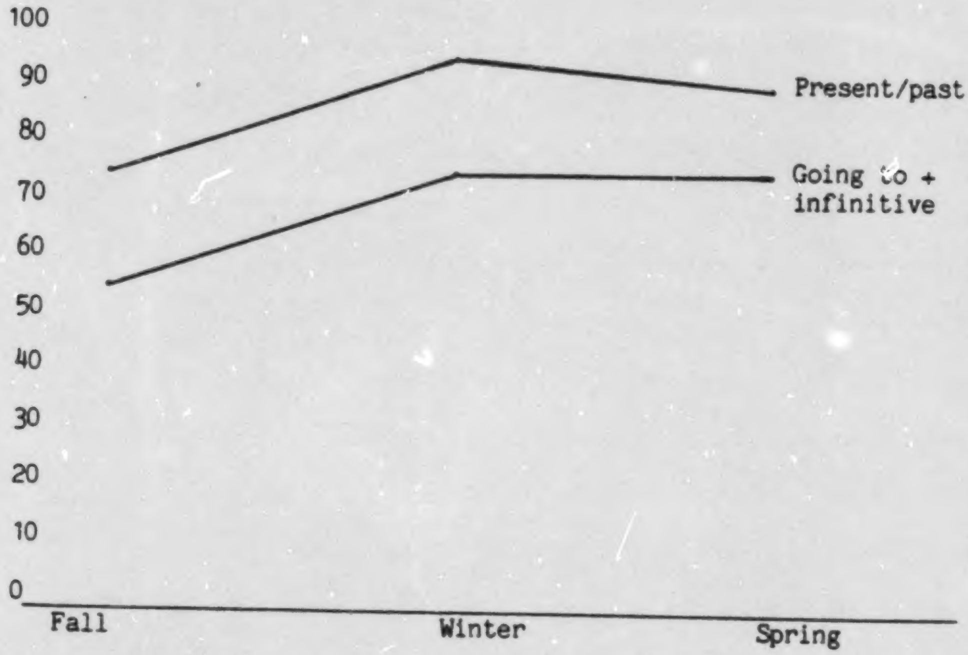


Figure 9.3. AUX suppliance in context of Verb + ING. Michael's whole journal.

A clear preference for supplying AUX in past/present progressive constructions is evident in the two journals analyzed. It may be that because in the going to + infinitive form there are already two verbs ("I going to study."), a third verb, BE, seems superfluous. It is also possible that going is considered the auxiliary to the main verb (study, for example).

Summary

In this discussion of the two morphemes involved in the formation of the progressive, AUX and ING, we have seen that although both are supplied early by these beginning ESL learners, confirming previous L2 studies, it is not as clear as it has seemed which is supplied first. Results depend on whether or not ambiguous AUX + Verb is included in the calculations. When the four possible patterns for progressive formation found in the journals are compared, it becomes clear that not only is AUX + Verb a prevalent pattern, but that there is individual variation in patterns for AUX and ING suppliance. As will be argued in the next section on the copula and BE use in general, this variation may be due to the first language background of the subjects.

It also appears from these data that there are some subprocesses involved in the acquisition of the progressive auxiliary. It is first supplied when I is the verb subject and later generalized to other contexts. It also appears that the auxiliary is first supplied in simple present/past constructions and later generalized to going to + infinitive constructions.

2. Copula

Although copula absence in equational clauses is a common characteristic of child first language production, of talk to foreigners and babies, of pidgins (Ferguson, 1971) and of certain dialects of English, this type of "simplification" is less prevalent in the speech of nonnative speakers of English. Copula deletion does occur in the process of learning English as a second language and has been investigated in all of the morpheme studies, but in those studies and in the present one copula appears with high frequency relative to other morphemes. The process that seems to differentiate morpheme acquisition in English as a first language from acquisition of English as a second language is the suppliance of copula (as well as progressive auxiliary)--children learning English as a first language supply the copula and auxiliary late, while second language learners supply them early.

In this section, copula presence in obligatory contexts in relation to progressive -ing and auxiliary (the three most frequently supplied morphemes in the dialogue journals) will be discussed. Since it is impossible to study copula suppliance in obligatory contexts without noticing the extensive overgeneralizations by some of the students of BE to inappropriate contexts, this pattern will also be discussed. It will be suggested that BE is the most salient morpheme in the early stages of English second language acquisition.

Details of the analysis

The presence of BE as copula with the following subject complements (a. & b.) and adverbial adjunct (c.) is analyzed:

a. Predicate adjective - John is tall.

b. Predicate nominative - Mrs. R. is my math teacher.

c. Predicate locative - I was in Burma.

Other verbs that act as copulas (e.g., appear, seem, feel, etc.) are not included in the analysis.

Statements and questions, both positive and negative, with both singular and plural subjects are treated together. Contractible and uncontractible copula are also considered together. "Uncontractible copula" occurs when a subject and verb are separated or when the copula carries tense or appears in non-finite form:

Is you sister in Burma? (copula before subject)

Yesterday you were absent. (past tense)

This is going to be very big. (non-finite form)

In other contexts the copula can be contracted:

The Burma school is (school's) no good.

That's right.

Ambiguous uses of BE in a possible context for copula are not included in this analysis:

I was sleep at the night . . .
[This could be "I was asleep" or "I was sleeping"]

In the scoring of copula suppliance, one point is given if the copula is present, no points if it is absent. As with the progressive auxiliary full credit is given if any copula is present, whether or not it is correctly marked for person, number, or tense. For example:

person - You is my favorite teacher

number - The children and men is very thin . . .

tense - Yesterday I ride the big ride.
I'm very scare.

The copula is considered supplied when two clauses are connected by a form of BE, and the direct object of the first clause is also the subject of the second clause (this construction was found frequently in one of the journals).

> I like homework is math.
> ["I like the homework. It is math."]
>
> Today we play kickball is fun games.
> ["Today we played kickball. It is a fun game."]

Presence of the copula in obligatory contexts

The patterns for copula suppliance in obligatory contexts in the dialogue journal writing of these students suggest that BE is the most salient morpheme in the early stages of the acquisition of English as a second language. In all of the journals except Su Kyong's, the copula (COP in figures and tables) is supplied in obligatory contexts over 90 percent of the time throughout the entire year. The copula is present even in the journals of the students who display very rudimentary knowledge of English, as this example from Laura's journal illustrates:

> Laura:
> S-20
>
> I like Italy because are my country. I ave [have] problems wyt [with] my hair because me dont look good and my mother donth beylivet [believe it]. So then maybe is not bad problem. . . . I dont ave fish but I like because are nice.

Su Kyong is the only exception. In the fall sample she almost never supplies the copula except when the verb subject is I. For example:

> Su Kyong:
> S-9
>
> today lunch Im no liek lunch [I didn't like lunch] but Im Hungelly [hungry] and Im eying [eating] and math time pushin the people.

With other subjects, the copula is absent:

Su Kyong: S-23 today . . . leticia ___ my flaend [friend] we do abresing [everything]. today ___flaend then tomorrow ___ not flaend ___so funny maby monday ___ not flaend.

As will be discussed in more detail later, it appears that Im has been learned as a frozen form. By the spring, the use of the copula has become more generalized:

Su Kyong S-76 Satrday I want [went] to the Disneyland is so fun . . . and the rikit [rocket] is so scar [scarey] . . . and I have nather [another] frand [friend] is so fun.

Percentages for suppliance of the copula in obligatory contexts are shown in Table 9.5. Suppliance scores given in this chapter will differ slightly from those given in Chapter Eight because in that chapter, only morphemes for which there were five occasions for occurrence were included in the analysis, where here all morphemes are included. The copula is supplied with greater frequency than the progressive auxiliary BE throughout the year, consistent with findings in both first and second language acquisition studies. This is shown in

	Fall		Winter		Spring	
U Chal	18/18	100	21/21	100	26/26	100
Laura	18/20	90.0	48/50	96.0	54/54	100
Andy	44/45	97.8	202/212	95.3	149/153	97.4
Michael	34/36	94.4	59/64	92.2	89/93	95.7
Su Kyong	17/23	73.9	21/26	80.8	33/35	94.3
TOTAL	131/142	92.3	351/373	94.1	351/361	97.2

Table 9.5. Copula suppliance in obligatory contexts.

Figure 9.4, based on the group scores for presence of copula, -ing, and progressive auxiliary in obligatory contexts. Ambiguous BE + Verb constructions are excluded in the first figure and included in the second (as discussed in the previous section on the progressive).

The difference between the two methods of calculation is that when ambiguous BE + Verb is excluded from counts, the position of COP relative to ING and AUX for both group and individual accuracy scores follows the "natural order" suggested by Krashen:

ING - COP
AUX

When ambiguous BE + Verb is included in counts, the order for individual and group scores is:

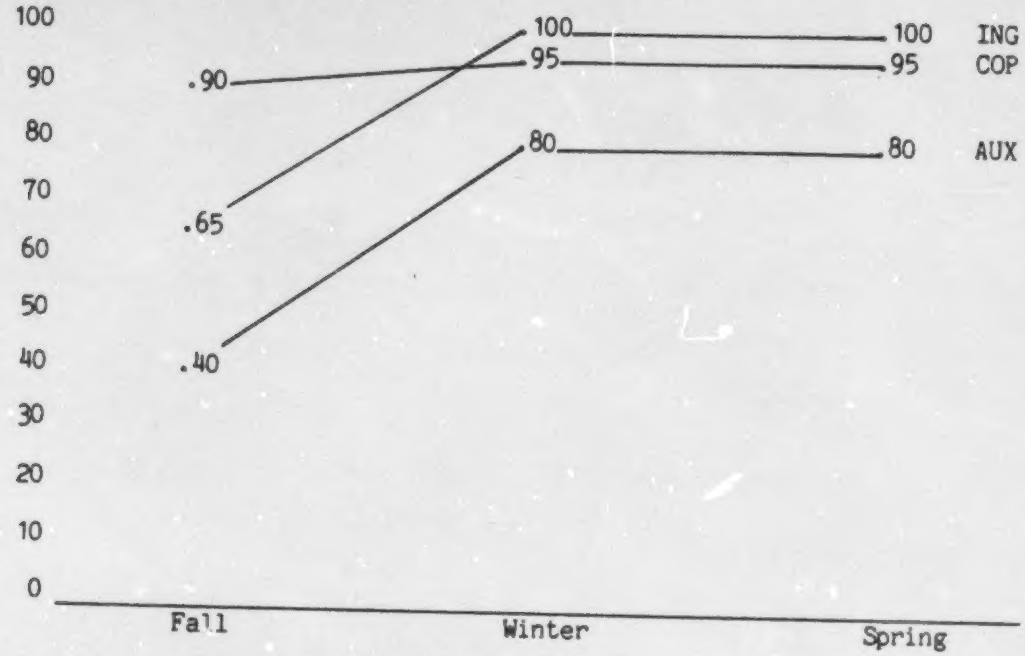
COP - AUX
ING

in the fall and winter. Only in the spring sample does ING precede AUX for most of the students. Thus, it appears in these data that BE is a more salient morpheme than ING.

Overgeneralizations of BE and ING

Many second language researchers (Hakuta, 1976; Andersen, 1977; Lightbown, Spada, and Wallace, 1978; Pica, 1983 among others) argue that in the study of morpheme acquisition it is not enough to consider only the suppliance of morphemes in obligatory contexts, for many instances have been found of overgeneralization of morphemes to inappropriate contexts, and it is misleading to state that a morpheme has been "acquired" when its function has not been mastered.

Ambiguous BE + Verb excluded



Ambiguous BE + Verb included

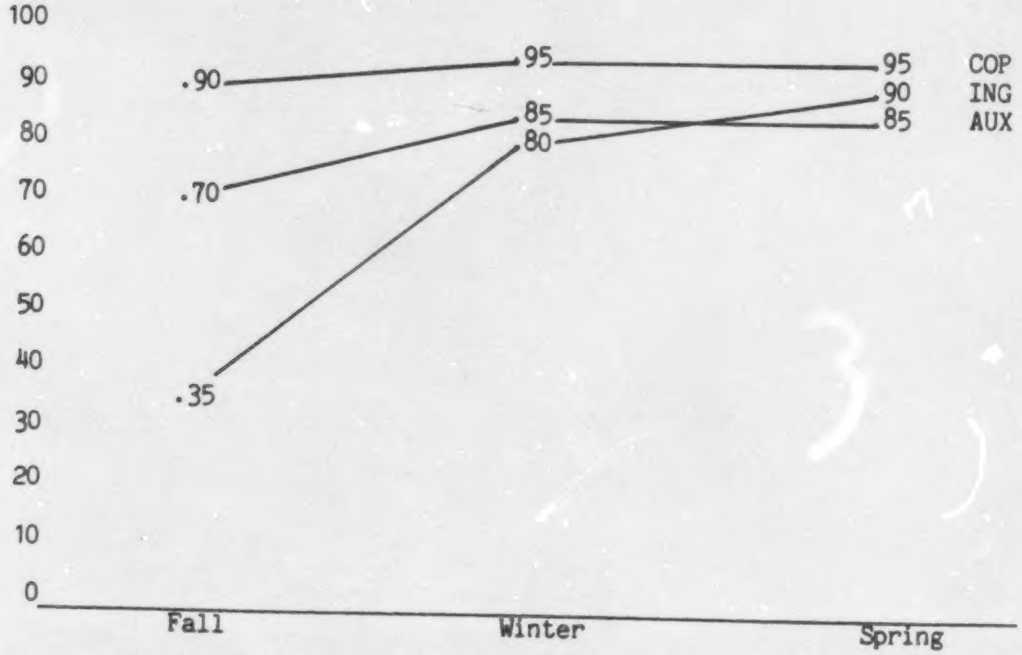


Figure 9.4. Copula in relation to progressive -ing and auxiliary. Group Scores.

The overgeneralizations of BE and progressive -ing to other contexts in the journals show that: 1) contrary to previous claims, BE is a more salient morpheme to some second language learners than ING; 2) although scores for copula suppliance are above 90 percent throughout the year for most students, the use of BE cannot be considered acquired by some of the students until late in the year; and 3) patterns for the use of BE seem to be related to the learner's first language.

Table 9.6 shows the instances of overgeneralizations of ING to contexts where no progressive is possible. These overgeneralizations occur in contexts for either the simple present or the present perfect, as in these two examples from U Chal's journal:

	Fall	Winter	Spring
U Chal	2	0	0
Laura	5	0	0
Su Kyong	2	3	0
Michael	1	4	1
Andy	0	9	2

Table 9.6. Instances of overgeneralizations of (AUX) Verb + ING.

> He is living here only 2 years.
>
> How many year he is collecting stamps?

or result from consistent use of particular words with -ing attached in all contexts, as in this example from Andy's journal, in which he writes moving throughout:

S-76 Today I am not happy, because I am moving. I go to Virgil Junior High School . . . so my mother said "Maybe moving Glendale" . . . I want moving, but I want finish Alexandria School . . .

[illegible] the same thing with learning. At the beginning of the yea[illegible] [illegible]es learning consistently in all contexts, so that four of her five overapplications of -ing are on the same word, learning. For example:

> I want learning more and more English.

In order to quantify percentages for overgeneralization of -ing, I have followed the method that Hakuta (1976) used to calculate mastery of the use of a morpheme, or the percentage of times that it is used in appropriate contexts. The number of times the morpheme appears in correct contexts is divided by the total number of times it is used (Table 9.7). We can see that especially at the beginning of the year some students have not mastered the function of -ing.

Much more prevalent in three of the journals, however, are overgeneralizations of BE. These are shown in Table 9.8.

	Fall		Winter		Spring	
U Chal	1/3	33.3	17/17	100	11/11	100
Laura	3/8	37.5	21/21	100	38/38	100
Su Kyong	12/14	85.7	20/23	87.0	10/10	100
Michael	8/9	88.9	26/30	86.7	31/32	96.9
Andy	-		21/30	70.0	11/13	84.6
TOTAL	24/34	70.6	105/121	86.8	101/104	97.1

Table 9.7. Percentage appropriate use of ING.

	Fall	Winter	Spring
U Chal	1	0	0
Laura	1	0	0
Su Kyong	3	5	4
Michael	24	23	12
Andy	28	57	32

Table 9.8. Instances of overgeneralizations of BE.

U Chal and Laura use BE in inappropriate contexts only once. However, Su Kyong, Andy, and Michael use BE in inappropriate contexts much more frequently. Table 9.9 shows the percentage of times that BE is used in appropriate contexts by each student. The numerator in each case is the total of unambiguous instances where BE is used correctly, either in the context for a copula or for a progressive auxiliary (BE + Verb which are ambiguously progressive are excluded), and the denominator is the total number of times that BE is used.

	Fall		Winter		Spring	
U Chal	19/20	95.0	37/37	100	37/37	100
Laura	19/20	95.0	69/69	100	69/69	100
Su Kyong	25/28	89.3	34/39	87.2	37/41	90.2
Michael	40/64	62.5	83/106	78.3	115/127	90.6
Andy	44/72	61.1	214/271	79.0	153/185	82.7
TOTAL	147/204	72.1	437/522	83.7	434/482	90.0

Table 9.9. Percentage appropriate use of BE.

It is very possible that overgeneralization of BE is related to language background. Laura (whose first language is Italian) and U Chal (whose first language is Korean, but he had spent the past seven years in Brazil, so that Portuguese is his second language and English his third) show very little overgeneralization of BE. On the other hand, Su Kyong and Andy (Korean) and Michael (Burmese) supply the copula in obligatory contexts with the same frequency as Laura and U Chal, but their patterns of overgeneralization of BE reflect aspects of the structure of their previous languages.

As stated earlier, at the beginning of the year, Su Kyong almost always writes Im when I is the verb subject. Since Korean employs a subject marker after the verb subject, it appears that Su Kyong is translating directly from Korean, using Im as subject (I) plus a subject marker (m), as the English substitute for the Korean subject (na) and subject marker (nun). Sometimes Im appears in the context for a copula ("Im Hungelly") and sometimes in the context for progressive auxiliary ("Im eating . . ."), but it also appears in the wrong context ("Im liek lunch."). Thus, her consistent use of Im gives her high scores for copula and auxiliary presence, while at the same time resulting in inappropriate uses of BE. By the end of the year, when she is writing I am rather than Im, scores for copula and auxiliary presence when I is subject decrease, as do overgeneralizations of BE.

The following example, from one entry early in the year, shows how often Michael uses BE. Sometimes it is correct, sometimes it is clearly incorrect, and sometimes it is impossible to determine whether it is correct or not:

S-6 You are welcome Mrs. Reed.

> Mrs. Reed, equator is a north, east, west, south, right?
>
> Mrs. Reed, yesterday we doing math is How many right, and How many wrong?
>
> Mrs. Reed, you know I'm live in Burmese. The Burma school is no good. You know why? At the Burma school is no free lunch. At the American school is good free lunch, and the games is funny games. At the Burma is no games. Only is you can fight . . . The American school is "You very good students you can skip to the 6 grate . . . Here is all is good friend.
>
> Where are you come from?
>
> How old are you?

For Michael BE may function as the topic emphatic particle ga in Burmese. In the following narrative, in which the simple past is required, he crosses out words ending with -ing, but in all cases leaves BE:

> . . . she open the bag and then bee is get away, and the hen is eat~~ing~~ the bee, and the fox was coming come back to the woman and said "the bee got away, and my hen was eat the bee . . .

Michael also uses BE:

- in the place of another verb:

  > Today I go to the math class I get two prize.
  > Yesterday is [I got] one and today is [I got] one.

- in the place of DO

  > I like chocolate but I am not very like.
  > [do not like it very much.]

- Often it appears that he uses BE to connect two clauses, replacing the mark of an embedded clause in Burmese, lou, with BE:

> Another reason is I don't understand is you write on the board.
> [What I don't understand is what you write on the board.]
>
> I mean is my father brother wife . . .
> [What I mean is . . .]
>
> . . . he said to his self is "I'm very smart."
> [What he said . . . is . . .]

By the spring, there are signs that Michael is learning the functions of BE. In these two passages, he uses is in the wrong context, and then crosses it out:

> . . . she say "I do not want Michael to wash the bath becuse he ~~is~~ never wash clean so I do not trust him and she ~~is~~ told my mother to wash. . . .
>
> Some of the word ~~is~~ I don't understand.

He also correctly joins two clauses with is:

> What I did for hanging one of the dolphin is Jung An did it for me.
>
> What I remember is yesterday I fold the paper.

Andy overapplies BE more than any other student, as shown in this passage from early in the year:

> S-19 today in the morning turtle is change water
> turtle. water turtle is too cute,
> and picture time is good picture
> teacher is good "teacher thanks"
> Steve and Ingrid is bad.
> Steve is strike Ingrid is my seat
> is Ingrid is the my seat
> Ingrid is bad yesterday too.
> today is I have a headache.

As in Su Kyong's journal, BE may be functioning as a subject marker. He frequently writes, "I am thank for you," for example, and sometimes uses a copula and a subject marker together ("I am be concerned."; "today is my watch is be out of order."). At times, when it looks as if he has substituted BE for another verb, "I am haircut" (I got a haircut), he may actually be writing, "I (subject marker) cut my hair." Korean also has a topic marker, which has the same form as the subject marker (nun). Many instances of BE in Andy's journal may be topic markers. In the above passage, "today is I have a headache" is a candidate. Literally, he may be saying, "As for today, I have a headache." Thus, the very confusing sentence in the example above:

> Steve is strike Ingrid is my seat
> is Ingrid is the my seat

makes sense as:

> Steve [is = subject marker] strike Ingrid.
>
> [is = unclear] As for my seat [is = topic marker],
>
> Ingrid [is = subject marker] in my seat.

Whether BE functions as a subject or topic marker is often ambiguous in Andy's journal, but the point is that in the following instances from the above entry, BE appears in the context for a copula, but may actually be functioning as a subject marker:

> water turtle is too cute
>
> picture time is good picture
>
> teacher is good
>
> Steve and Ingrid is bad

Summary

These data support previous findings that mastery of copula use in obligatory contexts is uniformly early in second language learning, regardless of first language background or individual learner characteristics. They also suggest that BE is the most salient morpheme for second language learners, at least during the early stages of language acquisition, rather than -ing, as has been suggested previously.

However, when we look beyond suppliance of BE in obligatory contexts to overgeneralizations, we see that total mastery of the functions of BE does not occur until much later for some students, and that patterns of BE use point clearly to first language influence. While Laura and U Chal hardly ever overgeneralize BE, there are extensive overgeneralizations in the journals of the three Asian students--two Koreans and one Burmese.

3. Past Tense

In the cross-sectional analysis of rank orders for morpheme suppliance, it was found that past tense inflections on both regular and irregular main verbs rank quite low relative to the other morphemes studied, regardless of the first language or individual characteristics of the learners, and that irregular verb inflections rank before regular verbs. This pattern confirms the "natural order" suggested by Krashen and the findings of most other morpheme studies.[2]

Up to now all main verbs have been treated together as either regular or irregular, and results have been presented cross-sectionally. In order to present a more comprehensive picture of the patterns for tense marking that can be expected in the dialogue journal writing of beginning ESL learners, in this section some of the factors that may influence tense marking in general and in dialogue journal writing in particular will be discussed.

The following passage from one entry in Michael's journal illustrates his tense marking patterns halfway through the school year.

> S-54 Yes the bicycle safty *was* so good. You know Simon and Betty *did* something to bicycle safty becuse you *said* "Go get the ball" and they *go* up and they *get* the paper and they *go* to the bicycle safty and they *said* "Will you please sign on this paper" . . . Yesterday after school I *give* the Godsize [god's eye] to Mrs. C___, then I *tell* her "This Godsize is for you," and she *said* "This is for me really really!" and I *tell* her "really" than she *said* "It is so cute thank you." I *said* "That's O.K."

This passage is a narration of two incidents that happened in school. Verbs which should be inflected for past tense are underlined; seven out of thirteen, or 54 percent, are marked for past, but actually one verb, *said*, accounts for five of the seven incidences. Besides *said*, only *was* and did are inflected for past.

The following exchange occurs later in the year:

Michael:
S-140 Mrs. Reed now at the Burma you could learn English start for kindergardon and they have TV too. Everything is been change at Burma . . . I don't know what happen at Burma. I never saw the T.V. at Burma . . .

T-140 How do you know about the schools at your home country? Did you get a letter?

S-141 How did I know about the schools at my home country! because the letter came to our home . . .

Here Michael marks both irregular verbs for past (saw and came). He doesn't mark the regular verb (happen) (if it should be marked; the context is unclear), nor the regular past participle (change). Whereas in the earlier passage he had marked did, he now overgeneralizes the use of did to a context where the present tense is required ("How did I know about the schools . . ."), even after the teacher has used the present tense ("How do you know about the schools . . ."). He also marks the modal could when present tense is required ("Now in Burma you can learn . . .").

These two samples illustrate some of the patterns that characterize past tense marking in the dialogue journals in this study:

- There are different frequencies for the tense marking of irregular and regular verbs;
- There are different frequencies for the marking of main verbs and verbal auxiliaries;
- For irregular verbs, there is a gradual increase in tense marking, along with the overgeneralization of some past tense forms;
- For regular verbs, there is general stability throughout the year in tense marking.

After a discussion of analytical procedures, each of these points will be discussed in turn.

Details of the analysis

Some verb forms are excluded from the analysis in this study because they are ambiguous:

- Verbs for which the present and past tense forms are the same.

  We put the boxes on the shelves.

- Contexts in which it is unclear whether the student is writing about a general state of affairs or about a particular event in the past:

  You know at the Burma we buy the enlish book is about $100 or $200 dollar, and we don't have the Christmas.

- Places in which the verb in the subordinate clause could be either in the past or the present:

  He said he don't [didn't/doesn't] want to read and he said he want [wants/wanted] to take the book to home . . .

- Got is excluded when it means have:

  I got very good on my math test. Isn't that great when you got a good grade.

Students use got for have in the journals in both past and present contexts, for both singular and plural subjects. In other contexts, got is included:

He got mad.

- Said occurs with high frequency in some students' writing and when it does occur, it is nearly always marked for past. Thus, inclusion of said in the totals would inflate suppliance scores, so it is excluded from totals (the use of said will be discussed in more detail later).

° At the beginning of the year, both Michael and Andy often use BE in the present with a past tense verb:

I am first came to school.

and Michael uses BE in the past with a non-past verb:

She was go to the other classroom.

As it is difficult to determine whether these instances constitute a misformation of the past or an overgeneralization of BE (as discussed in the section on the copula), they are considered ambiguous and excluded from the analysis.

The score used for calculations of tense marking is the score for any past marking, whether or not it is in the correct form. Thus, regularizations of irregular forms such as thinked and teached, of which there are very few in the data, are given full credit for tense marking of an irregular verb.

Past tense marking of regular and irregular verbs

Most first and second language acquisition studies have found that irregular verbs are marked for past more frequently than regular verbs. For example, in English as a first language, Brown (1973) found that irregular past forms were present for all three children even at Stage I, the stage at which inflectional markings are generally not present. In English as a second language, Christian et al. (1983) report that irregular verbs are marked for past more frequently than regular verbs in the speech of all of their Vietnamese subjects, regardless of age or length of residency in the United States. In the present study, past irregular is marked more frequently than past regular in both group and individual scores for all three sample periods of the year, as shown in Table 9.10.

	Fall		Winter		Spring	
Irregular						
U Chal	2/10	20.0	27/36	75.0	35/35	100
Michael	13/51	25.5	24/47	51.1	45/70	64.3
Andy	3/32	9.4	8/83	9.6	21/90	23.3
Laura	1/3	33.0	15/17	88.2	33/34	97.0
Su Kyong	2/12	16.7	7/18	38.8	8/25	32.0
TOTAL	21/108	19.4	81/201	40.3	142/254	55.9
Regular						
U Chal	2/10	20.0	4/10	40.0	2/11	18.2
Michael	6/28	21.4	1/14	7.1	3/17	17.6
Andy	0/10	0.0	1/20	5.0	0/23	0.0
Laura	1/4	25.0	4/10	40.0	1/4	25.0
Su Kyong	0/10	0.0	0/10	0.0	0/4	0.0
TOTAL	9/62	14.5	10/64	15.6	6/59	10.2

Table 9.10. Past tense marking of irregular and regular verbs.

Factors influencing tense marking

Several factors have been suggested in the past as reasons for the differential tense marking, in speech, of regular and irregular verbs—frequency of occurrence of the forms, the difference in the formation of the past tense for regular and irregular verbs, and the rote learning of individual lexical items. Each of these factors were investigated in these written data and will be discussed in turn.

Frequency of occurrence

Many researchers have concluded that frequency of occurrence of a given morpheme is at least one important factor in its accurate use by language learners (Larsen-Freeman, 1976; Long, 1980, for example). When comparing regular and irregular past, Brown (1973) found that irregular past occurred more frequently in the speech of both the children and adults in his study. This is true for these data as well. Table 9.11 shows the frequency of occurrence of irregular and regular verbs in a context in which the past is required (whether or not they are marked for past) in the five students' journal samples. Irregular past occurs more frequently in each period of the year, and this frequency could be a factor affecting tense marking. Although frequency in the teacher's writing was not quantified, the same pattern would probably be found.

	Fall	Winter	Spring	Total
Irregular	108	201	254	565
Regular	62	64	59	185

Table 9.11. Occurrence of irregular and regular verbs in past tense contexts.

It is also possible that frequency of individual verbs affects tense marking, with the most frequently used verbs being marked for past the most often. However, the data do not confirm this. Table 9.12 shows the verbs that are used in most of the journals and are used the most frequently by some of the students—was/were, went, came, main verb did, and had. Was/were are the most frequently occurring verbs in all of the journals (besides said). Laura and U Chal quickly mark them for past, Michael marks them variably, and Su Kyong and Andy rarely mark them, although Andy uses them more often than any other student. Main verb did, which occurs infrequently, is marked even by Andy, who marks few verbs for past tense. Thus, even though irregular verbs in general do occur more frequently in the students' writing, it is not clear that frequency is a major factor influencing tense marking.

	Fall	Winter	Spring
was/were			
U Chal	1/2	10/11	15/15
Laura	-	7/7	20/20
Michael	0/8	7/8	8/12
Su Kyong	0/3	0/2	1/12
Andy	3/22	0/18	1/34
went			
U Chal	0/2	1/2	5/5
Laura	-	-	2/2
Michael	0/10	0/3	2/3
Su Kyong	0/4	0/3	5/5
Andy	0/1	0/11	0/7
came			
U Chal	-	1/3	2/2
Laura	-	3/3	-
Michael	2/3	-	3/3
Su Kyong	0/1	2/3	0/1
Andy	0/2	3/8	6/9
did			
U Chal	0/2	2/2	2/2
Laura	-	-	-
Michael	1/1	1/1	3/4
Su Kyong	-	-	-
Andy	0/3	2/2	4/6
had			
U Chal	0/2	3/3	5/5
Laura	0/2	-	2/2
Michael	-	0/1	1/3
Su Kyong	-	-	0/2
Andy	-	0/2	-

Table 9.12. Tense marking on individual verbs. Five students.

Formation of past tense

The manner in which irregular and regular past tense is formed is a second possible factor influencing tense marking. Past tense inflection for irregular verbs involves a change in the verb stem (go/went), while the inflection for regular verbs involves the addition of a suffix at the end of the unchanged verb stem.

Hakuta (1976) argued, on the basis of spoken data, that a stem change is more salient to a language learner than the affixing of a morpheme "because affixes can be filtered out more easily in perception than roots" (p. 335), and thus it is the presence of a stem change that promotes tense marking of irregular verbs. Christian, et al. (1983) in their study of tense marking in the English of Vietnamese native speakers went one step further and classified different kinds of stem changes in past irregular forms. They found that frequency of tense marking tends to correlate with the degree of phonetic difference of the irregular past from its present tense form--"the more distant phonetically the past form is from the non-past, the more likely it will be marked for tense" (p. 187). Their four categories for irregular verbs range from most to least change in phonetic form: (1) suppletive forms such as *is/was* and *go/went*; (2) internal vowel changes plus a *d* or *t* suffix as in *do/did* and *keep/kept*; (3) internal vowel changes such as *come/came* and *sit/sat*; and (4) final *d* or *t* consonant replacement, as in *have/had* or *make/made*. In order to determine whether this "principle" for tense marking is evident in the written data in this study, the irregular verbs in the journals were divided into the same four categories. Table 9.13 shows group percentages for tense marking on each of the four irregular verb types and for regular verbs, for which there is no stem change, ranked from highest to lowest in the spring sample. The order for group scores is Vowel Change + Suffix > Vowel Change > Suppletive in all three periods. Replacive changes its rank each period, and ranks first in the fall and second in the winter. Except for the Regular Verb, which is marked the least frequently in the winter and spring, the expected order does not occur. In the winter and spring, percentages are also too close to provide evidence for any difference in tense marking based on verb type. Thus, it appears, by this calculation, that these data do not follow the principle.

	Fall		Winter		Spring	
Vowel Change + Suffix	11/34	32.4	30/75	40.0	41/71	57.7
Replacive	1/6	16.7	8/18	44.4	9/16	56.3
Vowel Change	5/16	31.3	17/44	38.6	26/41	54.0
Suppletive	4/52	7.7	28/83	38.5	65/121	51.3
Reg. Verb	9/62	14.5	10/64	15.6	6/59	10.2

Table 9.13. Tense marking by verb type. Group scores.

However, scores can also be computed in a way that gives equal weight to each different lexical item and prevents the possible skewing of scores that can result from repetitions of particular words (a method suggested by Pica, 1984). By this method, one point is given for each lexical item for which the morpheme is always supplied and no points for each lexical item for which the morpheme is never supplied. Where suppliance of a lexical item is variable, a percentage score is computed. For example, if a student has the following incidences of

past tense marking:	went	10/10
	gave	0/7
	came	5/10
percentages would be:	went	100%
	gave	0%
	came	50%

By this method of calculation (shown in Table 9.14), a pattern for the irregular verbs emerges in the spring which is both more revealing than the pattern in Table 9.13 because the range between percentages is greater, and is very similar to the principle for tense marking—Vowel Change + Suffix > Suppletive > Vowel Change > Replacives (Regular Verbs were not calculated in this way because of small numbers).

	Fall	Winter	Spring
Vowel Change + Suffix	24.2	59.7	71.7
Suppletive	8.0	42.9	63.9
Vowel Change	27.8	30.0	48.7
Replacive	16.7	50.0	43.3

Table 9.14. Tense marking by verb type. Group scores based on an equal score for each lexical item.

It would be helpful to examine whether a similar pattern by verb type would be evident for each student, but the numbers are generally too small to provide meaningful percentages. Analysis of Michael's whole journal, however, allows such an examination, because there are more tokens of each verb type. Michael's scores are shown in Table 9.15, ranked from highest to lowest in the spring, where the order follows the principle: Suppletive > Vowel Change + Suffix > Vowel Change > Replacive > Regular Verb. However, in the fall and winter the orders do not follow the principle, except that the Regular Verb ranks lowest in the winter.

In the spring in both group scores and Michael's individual scores the pattern for tense marking found for speech—that the more different the past tense form is from the present tense form, the more likely it is that the verb will be marked for tense—has been confirmed in these written data. It may be that in earlier stages of language acquisition learners use a word-related strategy for adding new past

	Fall		Winter		Spring	
Suppletive	3/25	12.0	12/37	32.4	25/29	86.2
Vowel Change + Suffix	8/17	47.1	12/25	48.0	25/39	64.1
Vowel Change	26/56	46.4	19/48	39.6	24/43	55.8
Replacive	0/3	0.0	9/13	69.2	4/13	30.7
Reg. Verb	6/28	21.4	1/14	7.1	3/17	17.6

Table 9.15. Tense marking by verb type. Michael's whole journal.

tense forms, selecting only certain verbs to mark for tense and ignoring others, and that patterns for tense marking based on form of the verb appear in later stages (this will be discussed in more detail later).

It has already been pointed out that one possible reason for infrequent tense marking of regular verbs is that no change occurs in the verb stem, so that regular verbs rank below all four irregular verb types. Wolfram (1984) points out that there are additional phonological factors constraining tense marking on regular verbs in speech—the shape of the verb suffix and the following phonological context (consonant, vowel, or pause). One of three endings is added to the regular verb stem, depending on the final segment of the stem: 1) If the verb stem ends in a consonant other than *t* or *d*, the past is formed by the addition of /-*d*/ if the segment is voiced (*climbed*) and /-*t*/ if the segment is voiceless (*jumped*). 2) If the verb stem ends in a vowel, a /-*d*/ is added (*stayed*). 3) If the verb stem ends in *t* or *d*, /-*id*/ is added (*started*). (In writing either of two suffixes, -*d* or -*ed*, is added.) When a -*t* or -*d* suffix is added to a verb stem that ends in a consonant (as in *jumped* and *climbed*), the resulting consonant cluster is often reduced to a single consonant (*jump* and *climb*). A following consonant favors this consonant cluster reduction. This process, which accounts for much of regular past tense unmarking in speech, occurs frequently in nonstandard dialects of English (Fasold, 1972; Wolfram and Fasold, 1974; Wolfram, et al., 1979), in the speech of nonnative speakers of English (Christian, et al., 1983), and, although to a lesser degree, in standard English.

This possibility was investigated for these data. Table 9.16 shows individual ratios and group scores for past tense inflections of three types: *-t/-d* following a consonant in the stem which creates a

	Fall		Winter		Spring	
Consonant, -t/-d (asked,climbed)						
U Chal	0/4		4/8		2/3	
Michael	5/21		1/10		3/12	
Andy	0/6		1/13		0/12	
Laura	-		4/8		0/2	
Su Kyong	0/7		0/5		0/2	
TOTAL	5/38	13.2	10/44	22.7	5/31	16.1
t/d,-id (wanted)						
U Chal	2/4		0/2		0/1	
Michael	0/2		0/1		0/3	
Andy	-		0/1		0/2	
Laura	-		0/2		1/1	
Su Kyong			0/2		-	
TOTAL	2/6	33.3	0/8	0.0	1/7	14.3
Vowel, -d (played)						
U Chal	0/1		-		0/3	
Michael	1/5		0/4		0/1	
Andy	0/3		0/7		0/8	
Laura	-		-		0/1	
Su Kyong	0/3		0/2		0/2	
TOTAL	1/12	8.3	0/13	0.0	0/15	0.0

Table 9.16. Regular past tense marking by phonological shape of suffix.

consonant cluster, -id following a t or d, and -d following a vowel. Results are inconclusive because of small numbers, but there is no evidence that consonant cluster reduction is an operative factor here.

There are two possible reasons that the pattern for tense marking of regular verbs which is common in speech is not confirmed in these data. First, phonological factors may play no part in written data, so that patterns for speech do not apply in writing. This does not seem to be a good explanation, however, because in other aspects of tense marking, written forms do seem to reflect patterns for speech. A more plausible explanation seems to be that for the Korean and Burmese students at least, phonological factors in the first language exert an influence as well. In both Korean and Burmese, CV (consonant-vowel) is the preferred canonical pattern, with no word-final consonants. To retain this pattern, the speakers of these languages would tend not to hear final consonant inflections, whether they appeared singly or in clusters, and would thus drop them in their speech. This process may be reflected in their writing. The convergence of two processes--the dropping of all final consonants and the fact that since there is no stem change on the regular verb, ESL learners do not notice the suffix--lead to very low frequencies for tense marking on regular verbs. While it is impossible to be sure of this conclusion based on the few tokens of regular verbs that are available in these data, this question is worth pursuing further with larger bodies of data.

Acquisition of lexical items as separate units

Another possible influencing factor in tense marking is the learner's acquisition of individual words marked for tense. Schumann

(1978) found that although his subject, Alberto, usually left both regular and irregular verbs unmarked for past, said was marked over 90 percent of the time. Only three other verbs--went, saw, and made--were usually marked correctly. Hakuta (1976) found that his subject, Uguisu, marked said, made, and forgot consistently from early speech samples. Christian, et al. (1983) argue that one reason for high incidences of past tense marking on irregular verbs, especially at the early stages of acquisition, is that certain forms are memorized as individual lexical items, rather than as a result of internal processing of the rules for tense marking.

We have seen in these data that although some pattern exists for tense marking by verb type for irregular verbs, this pattern is most evident only in the spring sample. When we look at individual verbs in each student's journal, it becomes clear that tense marking is closely tied to individual words. We have already seen that U Chal, Laura and Michael almost always mark was/were for past, while Su Kyong and Andy rarely do. At the beginning of this section it was stated that said was excluded from the counts for tense marking. This is because said occurs with high frequency in some students' writing and is almost categorically marked for past.

Table 9.17 shows incidences of tense marking on individual words by Michael, in the fall. Four verbs are always marked for past, nine are never marked, and only three verbs out of a total of sixteen are marked variably. When we look at the journals of each student across the year, we find the same pattern. Some verbs are always marked for past, some never are, while others are marked variably all year long. These are not the same verbs from student to student.

forgot	1/1		
found	2/2		
saw	2/2		
did	1/1	6/6	100%
got	0/1		
thought	0/2		
went	0/10		
gave	0/7		
was	0/8		
drank	0/1		
ate	0/1		
wrote	0/1		
knew	0/1	0/32	0%
came	2/3		
took	3/5		
told	2/5	7/13	53.8%

Table 9.17. Tense marking on individual verbs. Michael, fall sample.

That the acquisition of certain words as a single unit is one factor in the tense marking of both irregular and regular verbs in the journals is supported by Michael's overgeneralizations of the past to non-past contexts, as in the following examples. In each case, the verb always appears in the past form during the part of the year that it is overgeneralized.

I did not even made my travel poster yet.

Are we going to used the new language book . . .

We did not found the book . . .

Don't forgot to bring the picture . . .

Tense marking of verbal auxiliaries

The verbal auxiliaries BE ("I was playing the game.") and DO ("I didn't go." "Did you go?") are not included in counts for tense marking in the cross-sectional analysis, and have not been discussed so far in this section. However, when they are present, they were nearly always marked for past in the winter and spring by everyone except Andy (although they are frequently not present in the dialogue journals in the required contexts especially at the beginning of the year). Table 9.18 shows tense marking for DO and BE auxiliaries.

Aux DO	Fall		Winter		Spring	
U Chal	0/1		3/3		9/9	
Michael	1/2		21/21		24/26	
Andy	-		1/5		1/3	
Laura	-		4/5		11/11	
Su Kyong	0/2		3/3		4/5	
TOTAL	1/5	20.0	32/37	86.5	49/54	90.7

Aux BE	Fall		Winter		Spring	
U Chal	-		6/6		10/10	
Michael	0/1		5/5		5/6	
Andy	-		-		0/3	
Laura	-		1/1		-	
Su Kyong	0/2		0/3		2/2	
TOTAL	0/3	0.0	12/15	80.0	17/21	81.0

Table 9.18. Tense marking of auxiliaries DO and BE.

In Table 9.19, the group scores for auxiliaries DO and BE and for irregular and regular past main verb, we see that past tense marking is more frequent for the auxiliaries throughout the year.

	Fall		Winter		Spring	
Auxiliary DO	1/5	20.0	32/37	86.5	49/54	90.7
Auxiliary BE	0/3	0.0	12/15	80.0	17/21	81.0
Irregular MV	21/108	19.4	81/201	40.3	142/254	55.9
Regular MV	9/62	14.5	10/64	15.6	6/59	10.2

Table 9.19. Tense marking of auxiliaries and main verbs. Group scores.

These group scores are confirmed in Michael's journal, in Table 9.20.

	Fall		Winter		Spring	
Auxiliary DO	4/7	57.1	38/40	95.0	36/39	92.3
Auxiliary BE	1/4	25.0	13/17	76.5	12/13	92.3
Irregular MV	35/103	34.0	54/125	43.2	78/133	58.6
Regular MV	11/45	24.4	1/27	3.7	10/34	29.4

Table 9.20. Tense marking of auxiliaries and main verbs. Michael's whole journal.

This order supports the notion that forms marked early are those in which a stem change occurs—*was/were* are suppletive forms and *did* involves a vowel change plus the addition of a suffix. At the same time, auxiliaries, which are fronted in the sentence in questions ("*Was* he going?" "*Did* he go?") are marked before main verbs. To check this further, I calculated Michael's past tense marking of BE when used as a main verb and when used as an auxiliary, and found that the auxiliary is marked for past more frequently (Table 9.21).

	Fall		Winter		Spring	
BE auxiliary	1/4	25.0	13/17	76.5	12/13	92.3
BE main verb	3/9	33.3	12/22	54.5	19/30	63.3

Table 9.21. Tense marking of BE as auxiliary and as main verb. Michael's whole journal.

The salience of auxiliary *did* is clear in Michael's use of it in the journal. He quickly produces *did* in past contexts. At the same time, he begins to use auxiliary *did* in past form in all contexts, including those in which the past is not required, writing things like, "I guess we needed the big paper for the cubes Mrs. Reed. *Did* you think you could get it for me?" Even when Mrs. Reed asks a question using the present tense form, he answers with the past:

T-140	How do you know about the schools at your home country? Did you get a letter?
S-141	How did I know about the schools at my home country? Becuse the letter came to our house . . .

Michael's use of did may reflect effects of the dialogue journal writing. Most instances of his use (and overuse) of did occur in questions that begin with did ("Did you know . . .?" "Did you like . . .?"). He seems to have developed the practice of asking "Did . . .?" questions from reading Mrs. Reed's journal writing, as this exchange indicates:

T-29	Did you like the party? The cookies you brought were delicious . . .
S-30	. . . I want to do the party. Did you like the party?

Table 9.22 shows the frequency of "Did?" questions in Michael's and Mrs. Reed's journals during the year. In the spring, Michael frequently writes questions in this form, which Mrs. Reed has done frequently in the winter.

	Fall	Winter	Spring
Mrs. Reed	9	20	10
Michael	5	5	13

Table 9.22. Number of "Did?" questions. Michael's whole journal.

Summary

In this section we have explored the factors that influence tense marking in the dialogue journal writing of these beginning ESL learners. We have found that the factors involved are fairly complex, a combination of: whether the verb is a main verb or auxiliary (auxiliary is marked first); type of past tense formation (verbs with stem changes are marked first); and the acquisition by the students of individual lexical items in their past tense form. Although the frequent occurrence of individual words did not necessarily mean that they would be inflected for past, irregular verbs in general did occur with a much higher frequency than regular verbs, and _said_, which occurred frequently in most students' journals and _did_, which occurred frequently as well as in a fronted position in the teacher's questions, were almost categorically inflected for past. One phonological feature, consonant cluster reduction, was considered as a possible factor influencing tense _un_marking on regular verbs, but was found to be non-influential in these data.

Thus, overall patterns for tense marking in these written data are very similar to those found in previous studies of spoken data. The only difference found in this study is that the lack of tense marking on regular verbs cannot be attributed specifically to consonant cluster reduction. It is the long form for regular past, -_id_, and -_d_ following a vowel that are absent more often. There may be a more generalized process of final consonant deletion, whether or not it occurs in a cluster. This is probably a factor in these students' speech as well.

Changes over time in the use of the verb phrase morphemes

One of the research questions in this study is, "Is there evidence over time of increased proficiency on all of the morphemes studied?" The answer to this question should provide the basis for some expectations about beginning ESL learners' morpheme use over ten months' time (the length of a typical school year) in dialogue journal writing. To address this question, findings concerning the verb phrase morphemes discussed in this chapter are pulled together in this section to determine whether there is enough uniformity between students to allow for some predictions. Table 9.23 reviews individual and group ratios for suppliance of the verb phrase morphemes in obligatory contexts. Rather than listing progressive -ing and auxiliary separately, the percentage for suppliance of -ing and the auxiliary together (Verb + AUX + ING) out of the total number of possible forms to express the progressive (which includes also AUX + Verb, Verb + ING, and Verb alone) is given. Our interest here is the students' use of the full progressive form when the progressive is possible.

Some predictions about change over time can be made, based on group scores. Figure 9.5 illustrates group scores on each of the structures in the three periods during the year. Copula suppliance is above 90 percent at the beginning of the year, and nearly reaches 100 percent by the end of the year. Dramatic increases are made in the suppliance of the progressive and past irregular morphemes, while past regular is supplied infrequently both at the beginning and the end of the year.

Copula	Fall		Winter		Spring	
U Chal	18/18	100	21/21	100	26/26	100
Laura	18/20	90.0	48/50	96.0	54/54	100
Michael	34/36	94.4	59/64	92.2	89/93	95.7
Andy	44/45	97.8	202/212	95.3	149/153	97.4
Su Kyong	17/23	73.9	21/26	80.8	33/35	94.3
TOTAL	131/142	92.3	351/373	94.1	351/361	97.2
AUX + Verb + ING						
U Chal	1/13	7.7	16/17	94.1	11/11	100
Laura	1/4	25.0	21/22	95.5	38/39	97.4
Michael	4/14	28.6	24/28	85.7	26/32	81.3
Andy	0/18	0.0	11/37	29.7	4/17	23.5
Su Kyong	7/19	36.8	13/26	50.0	4/13	30.8
TOTAL	13/68	19.1	85/130	65.4	83/112	74.1
Past Irregular						
U Chal	2/10	20.0	27/36	75.0	35/35	100
Laura	1/3	33.0	15/17	88.2	33/34	97.0
Michael	13/51	25.5	24/47	51.1	45/70	64.3
Andy	3/32	9.4	8/83	9.6	21/90	23.3
Su Kyong	2/12	16.7	7/18	38.8	8/25	32.0
TOTAL	21/108	19.4	81/201	40.3	142/254	55.9
Past Regular						
U Chal	2/10	20.0	4/10	40.0	2/11	18.2
Laura	1/4	25.0	4/10	40.0	1/4	25.0
Michael	6/28	21.4	1/14	7.1	3/17	17.6
Andy	0/10	0.0	1/20	5.0	0/23	0.0
Su Kyong	0/10	0.0	0/10	0.0	0/4	0.0
TOTAL	9/62	14.5	10/64	15.6	6/59	10.2

Table 9.23. Suppliance of verb-related morphemes in obligatory contexts.

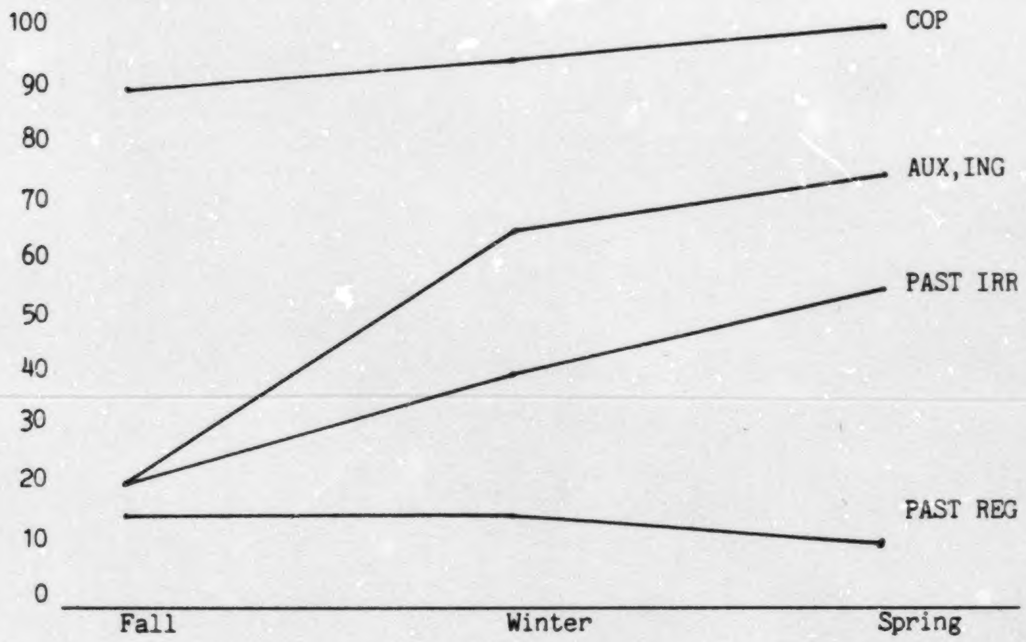


Figure 9.5. Change over time in suppliance of verb-related morphemes. Group scores.

Figure 9.6 shows the suppliance of the same morphemes by individual students.

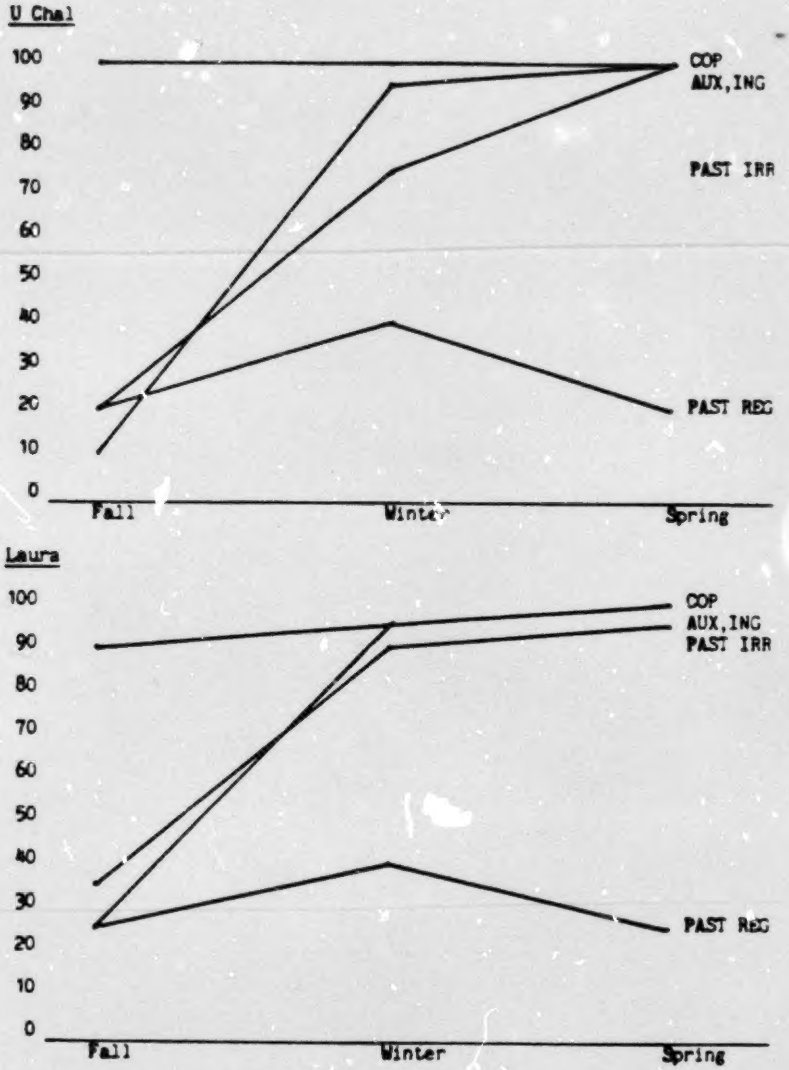


Figure 9.6. Change over time in suppliance of verb-related morphemes. Individual students.

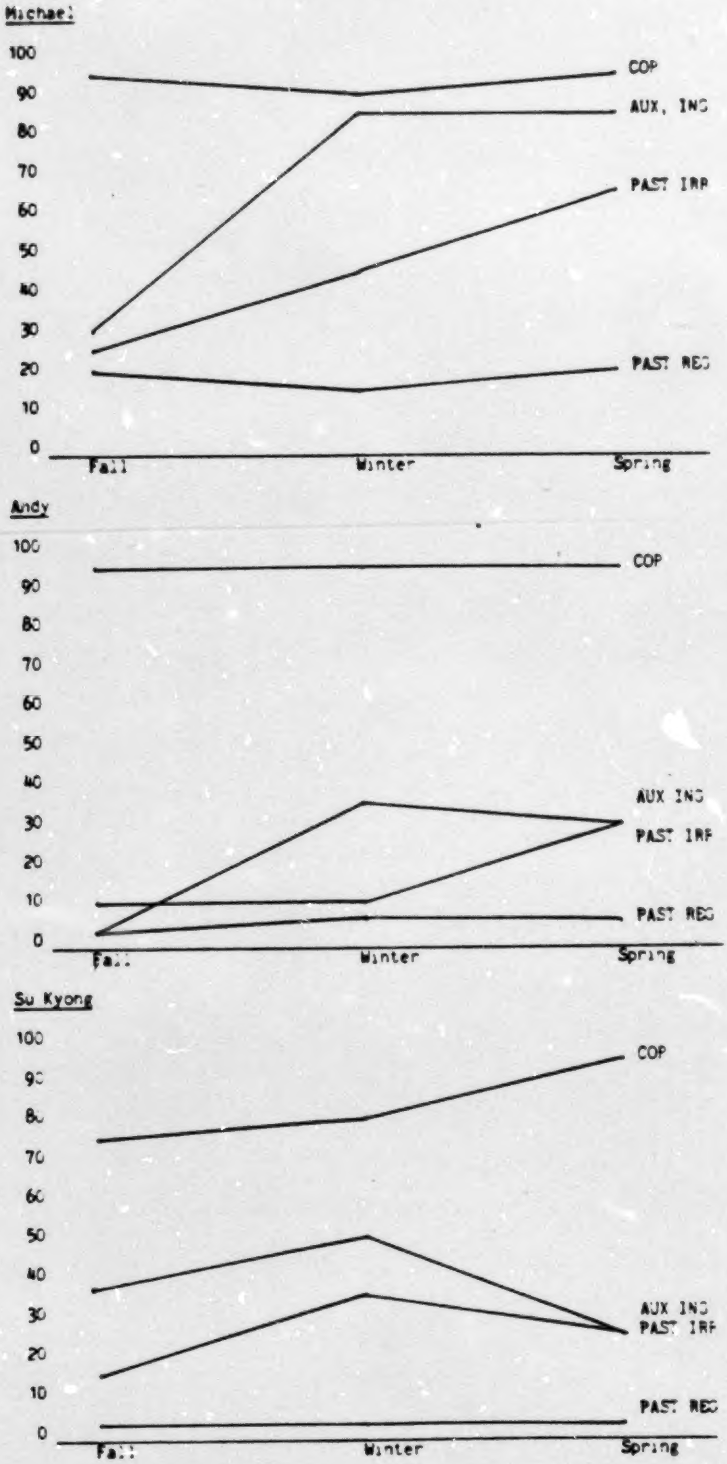


Figure 9.6, continued.

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Table 9.24 summarizes the morphemes that change over time, based on a criterion of change of 10 percent or more from the fall to spring. Patterns of change for the verb phrase morphemes are quite uniform among individual students. Copula and past regular show no change in most of the individual scores (for copula no change is possible unless backsliding occurs, since beginning scores are over 90 percent). Irregular past and progressive auxiliary and -ing change in almost all individual scores. There is no backsliding (a decrease in accuracy of at least 10 percent) on any of the morphemes.

	5 students	Laura	U Chal	Michael	Andy	Su Kyong
past irr	+	+	+	+	+	+
aux, ing	+	+	+	+	+	0
copula	0	+	0	0	0	+
past reg	0	0	0	0	0	0

+ = improvement of at least 10%

0 = no change of at least 10%

Table 9.24. Morphemes that change over time by group and individual scores.

Thus, based on the data for these five students, we can predict that in the dialogue journal writing of beginning ESL learners over ten months' time, copula suppliance will remain stable (nearly always supplied in obligatory contexts), as will past regular inflections (usually not supplied), while suppliance of progressive auxiliary and -ing and past irregular forms will improve perceptibly.

These patterns point very clearly to the salience of the copula, the progressive auxiliary and -ing, and the irregular past forms, all of whose forms constitute a separate syllable. All four morphemes not only rank consistently higher than the nonsyllabic regular past morpheme, but also show perceptible improvement over time.

Overgeneralizations of BE and -ing to other contexts decrease over time, so that along with improvement in suppliance of BE and -ing in obligatory contexts, there is also improvement in the appropriate use of BE and -ing, as shown for group scores in Figure 9.7 (the scores on which this figure are based are in Tables 9.7 and 9.9 in the section on the copula).

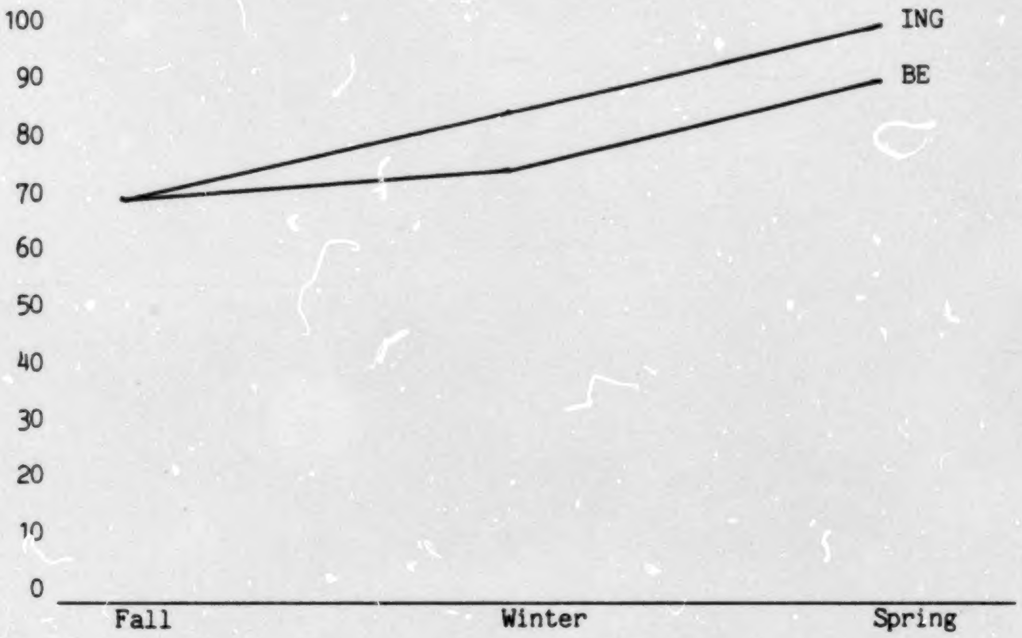


Figure 9.7. Change over time in appropriate use of BE and -ing. Group scores.

There is one more area in which change can be expected. So far in this section change has been quantified on the basis of suppliance of a morpheme once a context exists for its occurrence. But Brown (1973) observed, "the constraints that define obligation themselves are acquired over time" (p. 257). Possibly as important an indication of linguistic competence as suppliance of a morpheme when the context requires it is the creation of the context itself. In the journals, possible contexts for copula, third singular and regular past remain quite stable, but the possible contexts for progressive auxiliary and -ing and for irregular past increase dramatically in most of the journals, as shown in Table 9.25.

	Fall	Winter	Spring
AUX and ING (ambiguous instances excluded)			
U Chal	12	17	11
Laura	3	21	38
Michael	10	26	31
Andy	0	22	11
Su Kyong	13	20	10
TOTAL	38	106	101
Irregular Past			
U Chal	10	36	35
Laura	3	17	34
Michael	51	47	70
Andy	33	84	90
Su Kyong	12	18	25
TOTAL	109	202	254

Table 9.25. Obligatory contexts for AUX and ING and irregular past.

This further supports the notion that frequency of occurrence is one of the factors influencing morpheme acquisition. Those morphemes for which there is improvement over time (progressive auxiliary, progressive -ing, and past irregular) are precisely those for which more obligatory contexts for use develop as the year progresses.

NOUN PHRASE MORPHEMES

1. Articles

The use of articles may be the most difficult task in the learning of English at the morphological (or actually functor) level. Besides knowing when to and when not to use an article, language learners must also know which article to use: when to use the definite article (the) and when to use the indefinite article (a). It has been suggested that the use of articles cannot in fact be learned by rule, but must instead be "acquired" as they are used in communication, for the rules for use are complicated and difficult to "learn" (Krashen, Butler, Birnbaum and Robertson, 1978). Turner, 1978; Pica, 1983). Evidence from the morpheme studies supports this. In studies of morpheme production in natural communication, articles tend to rank high relative to the other morphemes. However, in written test situations, in which learners have time to think about their production and are focused on form, articles rank low. At the same time, the morphemes that are easily learned by rule and usually rank low in natural communication (regular past tense and third person singular -s) rise in rank in written test situations (Larsen-Freeman, 1975; Krashen, Butler, Birnbaum & Robertson, 1978).

In this section we are interested in examining several aspects of the use of articles by the five students in their dialogue journal writing—their use in obligatory contexts, overgeneralizations to non-obligatory contexts, and variation in article use related to article type (definite or indefinite) and first language background of the students.

Details of the analysis

The following two samples from Michael's dialogue journal illustrate some prevalent patterns in his use of articles.

S-16 Mrs. Reed yesterday I go to Chinatown, and I want to read, and I ask my sister, "Can I use your library card" and she said, "You can use the library card, but don't lose the card." And I go to ____ library and I found it the I want to read so I go ___ library woman she said, "who is this card" and I said, "This is my sister card," and she said, "Call your sister, and comeing to get the book and get the library card. I go to home and tell the sister she took the card. My sister said that OK, becuse she is go to ___ library is everyday.

S-68 Mrs. Reed one time I go to my sister house with the buses and I saw the big man in the buses he is tall in the buses. You know at the Burma we have the disco house for tape. Some of holiday and the sing and dance and you know what happen to the some of the people . . .

In these sample passages, only the definite article is present.

Sometimes it is used correctly in obligatory contexts:

. . . coming to get the book and get the library card.

At times it is not present in obligatory contexts:

. . . and I go to ___ library . . .

At times it is overgeneralized to contexts in which:

- no article is required:

  You know at the Burma we have . . .

- a is required:

  . . . I saw the big man in the buses . . .

- a possessive pronoun is required:

  I go home and tell the sister . . . (my sister)

In order to make decisions about article use, it is necessary to look beyond the sentence to the whole entry or interaction wherever possible. For example, Michael writes:

> S-64 I have to tell you something if we have homework for to read at home but if I read the book, I don't look at the clock . . . Can I write the how many page I read the book? . . .

From the context, it is clear that in the first instance he should have written "a book" because it is the first mention of the book in the interaction, and he is writing about reading any book. In the second instance, "the book" is correct, as he is referring to the book already mentioned in the same entry.

However, not all instances of article usage and non-usage are clearcut, and many ambiguous cases had to be excluded from the analysis, when:

° It could not be determined whether an article should be supplied or not.

> I am play in the morning___game is ___ funny game.
> I like ___ game.

At the time that this example was written, this student did not inflect plurals or past tense. It is possible that he is writing, "I liked the game" or "I like games."

> . . . she help me with the math.

"She helped me with math" and "she helped me with the/my math" are both possible.

° It could not be determined whether the definite or indefinite article should be supplied.

> today we had the test it seem so easy to me.

In this example an article has been supplied, but it is unclear with the information available in the journal whether a should have been used because this was the first mention of the noun in question, or the because reference is being made to a previously mentioned item.

In the cross-sectional analysis in Chapter Eight, full credit was given for the use of any article in a context in which an article was necessary, even when an indefinite article was used in the context for a definite article. The focus of that analysis was the use of any article at all. In this section, definite and indefinite articles are treated separately. Thus, the score used for analysis is the score for a correct article. This means that if a appears in the context for the, the is counted as not present in an obligatory context and a is considered as an overgeneralization.

Definite and indefinite articles in obligatory contexts

Brown (1973) collapsed definite and indefinite articles into a single category because he had difficulty separating contexts for the use of a and the, and was therefore forced to relegate much of his data on article use to a "doubtful" category. de Villiers and de Villiers (1973) followed the same procedure. This method for analyzing articles was carried over to the morpheme studies of English as L2, and in nearly all of these studies and in Krashen's representation of a "natural order" for morpheme acquisition articles are considered as a single category. In the present study as well, to provide a basis for comparison with the other studies, a single score for articles was reported in the cross-sectional analysis. The rank order for articles as a single category in the dialogue journal writing was found to be identical to that found in previous studies.

However, some researchers who have separated articles into definite and indefinite categories have found that they demonstrate very different patterns of acquisition (Hakuta, 1976; Rosansky, 1976; Andersen, 1977), and Andersen claims that *the* and *a* present different problems for all second language learners and thus should be considered separately in all studies of morpheme acquisition.

The possibility that article type could be a source of variation in article suppliance rates was investigated in this study and the results confirm Andersen's claim. Table 9.26 gives the individual and group scores for the presence of definite and indefinite articles in obligatory contexts. While in the cross-sectional analysis articles rank quite high (after progressive -*ing* and copula), when they are separated, they demonstrate very different patterns of use. In group scores, only *the* is consistently present with high frequency in contexts where it is required, while *a* is rarely present at the beginning of the year, and even at the end of the year remains far below *the*. This is shown in Figure 9.8. This pattern of *the* being supplied in obligatory contexts more frequently than *a* is consistent among all five students. However, there is additional variation among students in suppliance of the two articles in obligatory contexts. While Figure 9.8 gives the impression that use of *the* remains stable throughout the year and that *a* use steadily increases, this is actually a result of differing performance by the individual students, as shown in Figure 9.9.

Definite Article	Fall		Winter		Spring	
U Chal	50/57	87.7	69/75	92.0	51/52	98.1
Laura	6/10	60.0	40/40	100	35/35	100
Su Kyong	8/12	66.7	21/31	66.7	22/27	81.5
Michael	39/43	90.7	120/130	92.3	102/129	79.1
Andy	14/22	63.6	18/71	25.4	26/48	54.2
TOTAL	117/144	81.3	268/347	77.2	236/291	81.1
Indefinite Article						
U Chal	4/11	6.3	17/20	85.0	13/13	100
Laura	0/13	0.0	16/17	94.1	14/14	100
Su Kyong	0/8	.0	0/8	0.0	3/8	37.5
Michael	3/8	.5	0/14	0.0	16/43	37.2
Andy	7/14	0.0	2/32	6.3	7/25	28.0
TOTAL	11/54	20.4	35/91	38.5	53/103	51.5

Table 9.26. Use of definite and indefinite articles in obligatory contexts.

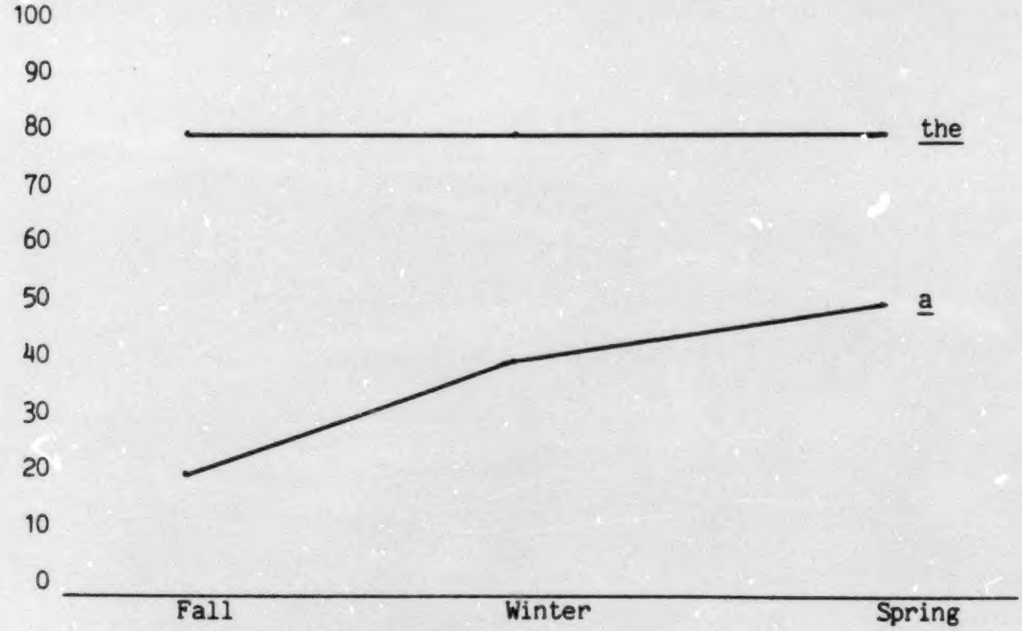


Figure 9.8. Definite and indefinite articles in obligatory contexts. Group score.

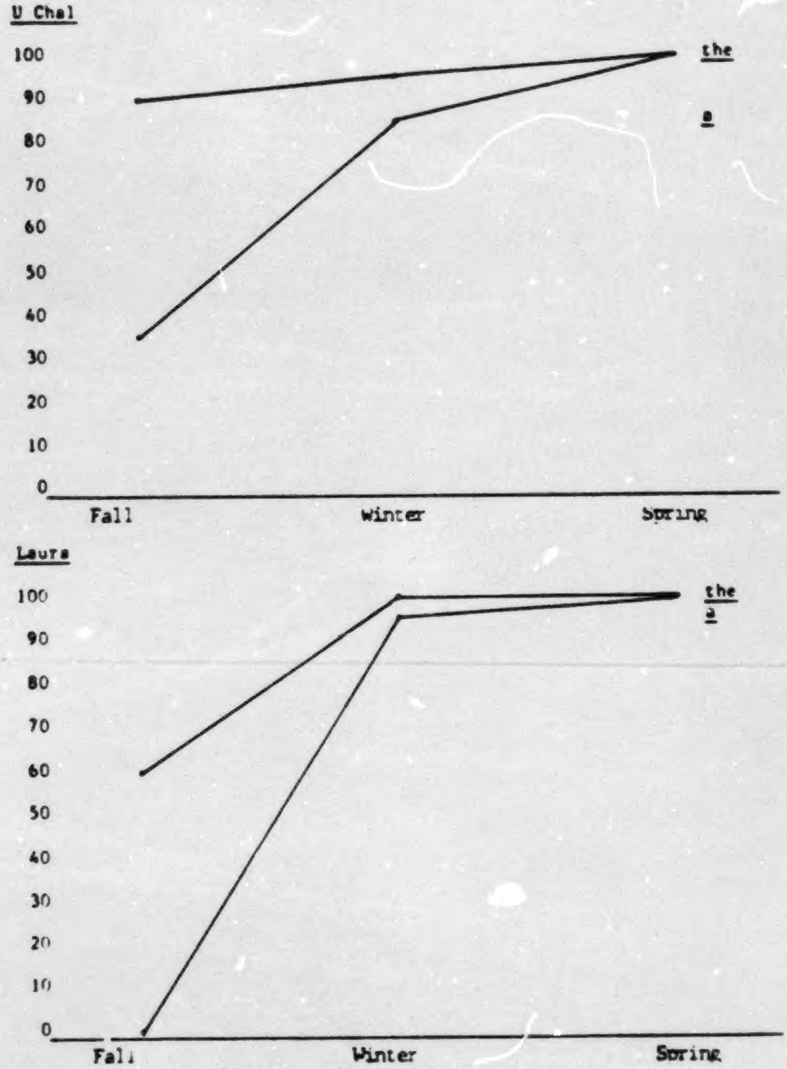


Figure 9.9. Definite and indefinite articles in obligatory contexts. Individual students.

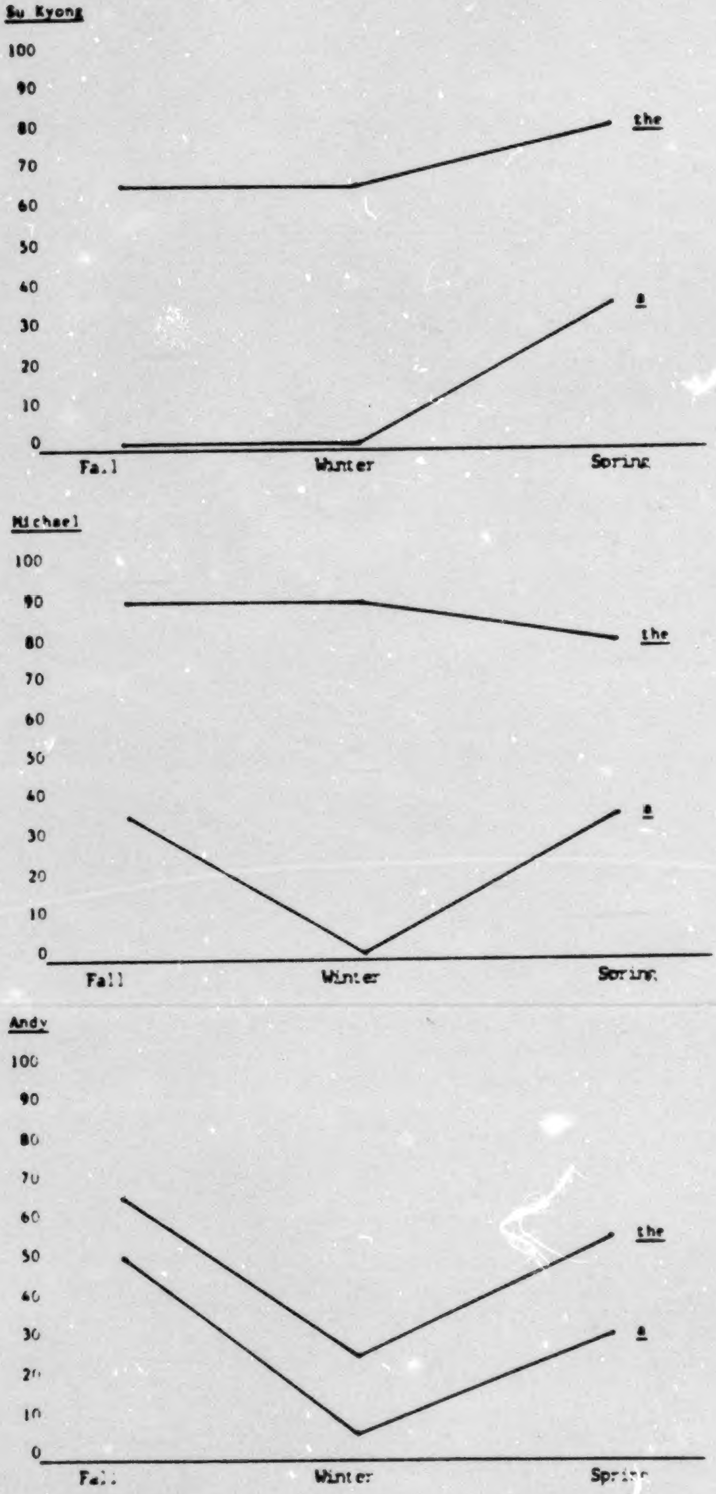


Figure 9.9., continued.

Several researchers have argued that variability in article suppliance reflects first language background (Dulay and Burt, 1975; Rosanksy, 1976; Andersen, 1977; Kessler and Idar, 1979). The evidence from Figure 9.9 confirms these findings. Laura and U Chal, whose previous languages (Portuguese and Italian) have articles, learn to supply both *the* and *a* in obligatory contexts very quickly and reach 100 percent accuracy on both by the end of the year. However, Su Kyong, Andy, and Michael, whose previous languages (Korean and Burmese) have no articles, never reach 90 percent accuracy. Use of *a* remains far behind *the*, and Michael's and Andy's scores actually decrease over time.

Another first language-related pattern is U Chal's and Laura's use of *one* in place of *a* in the fall: "I have *one* new book." This seems to be a direct transfer from Italian (*uno/un*) and Portuguese (*um*).

Overgeneralizations of articles

As well as learning to use the correct article in contexts where one is required, these students must also learn *not* to use articles in contexts where no article is required. For some of the students, overgeneralizations of articles are as frequent as their omission. Articles are overgeneralized in the journals to a variety of contexts, as the following examples show.

- before proper names
  I have two sisters at *the* Burma.
- with places
  We went at *the* outside.
- with dates and days
  at *the* Feb. 5, 1981
- with plural and non-count nouns
  We got a lot of *the* vacations.
  I need *the* something.

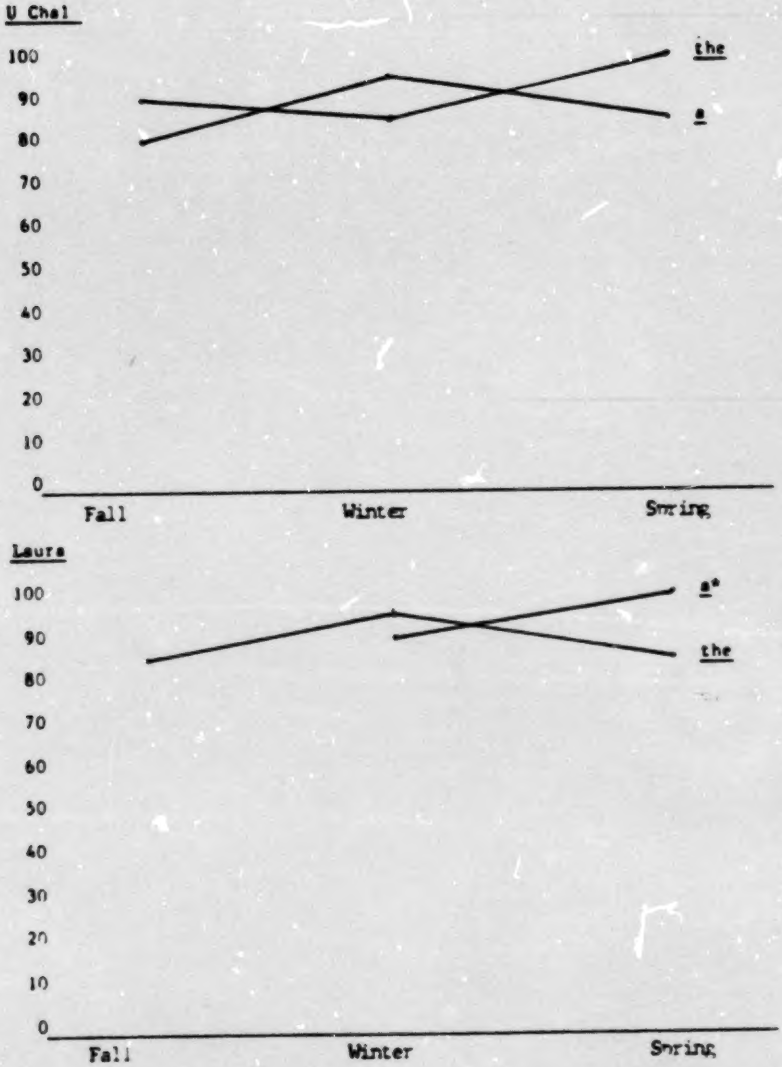
- with titles
  Did you ever see the "The Empire Strikes Back."
- before quantifiers and demonstratives
  I saw the many game.
  Write on the another journal.
- after the adjective in a noun phrase
  . . . except the hostages the letter.
- in place of a possessive pronoun
  He hurt the hand. (his hand)
- in place of another article
  What time is a test?

In order to determine each student's total control of the function of articles (rather than simply use in obligatory contexts), I calculated a percentage of appropriate article use, shown in Table 9.27. The numerator represents the number of times the article is used in the correct context and the denominator, the total number of times the article is used (correct use + total overgeneralizations).

The development of the appropriate use of articles is not at all uniform among students (individual patterns are shown in Figure 9.10) and, like the suppliance of articles in obligatory contexts, variation appears to be related to first language background. While U Chal and Laura show consistently high scores for their use of both articles in appropriate contexts, Su Kyong's, Michael's, and Andy's scores remain quite low. Michael's and Andy's use of a in appropriate contexts decreases over time.

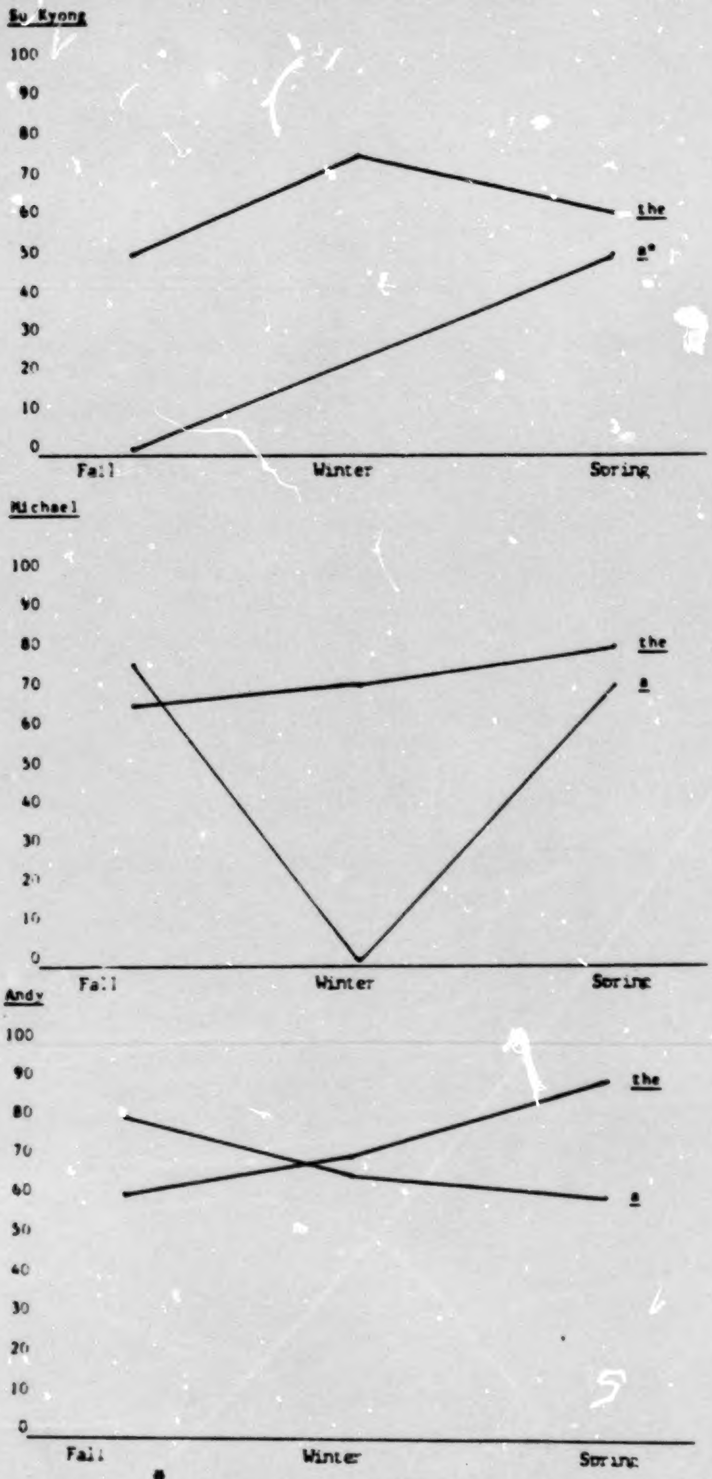
the	Fall		Winter		Spring	
U Chal	50/55	90.9	69/79	87.3	51/52	98.1
Laura	6/7	85.7	40/42	95.2	35/40	87.5
Su Kyong	8/15	53.3	21/27	77.8	22/35	62.9
Michael	39/61	63.9	120/169	71.0	102/131	77.9
Andy	14/23	60.9	18/25	72.0	26/29	89.7
TOTAL	117/161	72.7	268/342	78.4	236/287	88.2
a						
U Chal	4/5	80.0	17/18	94.4	13/15	86.7
Laura	-		16/18	88.9	14/14	100
Su Kyong	0/6	0.0	-		3/6	50.0
Michael	3/4	75.0	0/1	0.0	16/23	69.6
Andy	7/9	77.8	2/3	66.7	7/12	58.3
TOTAL	14/24	58.3	35/40	87.5	53/70	75.7

Table 9.27. Percentage of appropriate use of articles (correct use divided by total use).



* A was not used by Laura in the fall sample.

Figure 9.10 Appropriate use of definite and indefinite articles. Individual students.



* A was not used by Laura in the fall sample.

Figure 9.10, continued.

Another cause of variation in overgeneralizations of articles may be individual preferences for certain articles. Only Su Kyong tends to use *a* in contexts for *the* in Period 1, especially before "people":

> I don't like *a* people in that room . . .

Michael seems to apply an initial "rule" for article use—"use *the* with any noun." As a result, Michael supplies *the* in obligatory contexts with a higher frequency than any other student (90 percent at the beginning of the year), but he also overgeneralizes *the* to many contexts where no article is needed. No other student uses articles in such a wide range of contexts as Michael. He writes "at *the* Burma" consistently for most of the year, even though Mrs. Reed often responds with "in Burma." As he sorts out when *not* to use *the*, he begins to use it less frequently in obligatory contexts as well, and his score decreases to 79 percent. For example, at the beginning of the year, he frequently uses *the* before the name of a city or country:

> S-3 We live in *the* North America or South America.
>
> S-7 . . . You know at *the* Burma . . .

As he stops writing "the Burma," he also omits *the* in other contexts where it is needed:

> S-143 . . . my sisters is *at Burma* . . . I hope they
> come *to U.S.A.*

He also frequently uses *the* in the context for *a*. In the winter sample he makes this substitution eleven times. The following example comes from one of his entries in the winter. Each underlined instance of *the* is really a context for *a*.

> S-103 Yesterday Simon took *the* picture is very good.
> Claudia got *the* camera too she will take the
> picture of we painting the wall isn't that nice to
> have *the* camera and take *the* picture.

Andy's score for the suppliance remains low all year. However, he consistently writes, "Today in the morning . . ." in which the article is always present, instead of "this morning."

It is not surprising that there is so much confusion with the use of articles when we look at the structure of English. Here are just a few example pairs found in the journals that are structurally similar, but different as regards article presence.

in the morning
at night

in the U.S.
in Burma

in the school
at school
after school

watching the movie
watching TV

In each case, it is easy to generalize, based on the first example, that an article should be present in the other, and those students in this study who tend to overgeneralize articles tend to use the in both instances.

Summary

In this section we have seen that in order to adequately represent variation in the use of articles by ESL learners, both in obligatory and non-obligatory contexts, definite and indefinite articles must be treated separately. The is clearly the preferred article for all of the students in this study, both supplied in obligatory contexts and used appropriately before a, although it is also the article that is overgeneralized to other contexts the most frequently. As with the other structures that have been discussed, some uniformity is certainly evident in the acquisition of articles by all ESL learners (here we found that control of the definite article is acquired before the indefinite article). However, first language background contributes to variability in the acquisition of articles. Those students whose first language has articles show much greater proficiency over time in the use of both definite and indefinite articles than those whose first language has no articles.

2. Possessive

In the cross-sectional analysis of rank orders, the possessive morpheme -'s (John's book) follows the order found in most other studies and Krashen's "natural order" for only three of the five students. In this section, we will see that there is a lot of individual variation in the frequency of suppliance of -'s in a possessive noun phrase, and that this variation may be associated with the students' first language.

Details of the analysis

The following two examples from Laura's and Andy's journals in the spring serve to show the patterns for possessive marking found in the journals and the wide range in patterns among the students.

Laura S-110	. . . today is Nickys birthey [birthday] do you know that. when are we going to make flours [flowers] for mother day card. way [why] you don't you want to tell us when is your birthey? My sister birthey is going to be the May 25 . . .
Andy S-135-145 (selected passages	. . . one day is Korean holiday, children's day . . . After Saturday is mom's birthday. So maybe my mom is happy today. . . . I like Sompob's journal because his journal is nice. So now i copy Sompob's journal. . . . Today in the morning my kindergarten's sign is finish. . . . Today us room move the library because us room's window fixed.

Laura's example is representative of three of the students in the spring (Andy's example will be discussed later). Noun phrase possessive is usually expressed by two nouns with no -'s suffix.

Possessive pronouns generally appear in the correct form in the journals, so that only possessive noun phrases are included in counts of possessive marking (there are some deviations--us room, above, for example--which will be discussed later).

Both -s and -'s appear in contexts for the possessive (mom's birthday, Nickys birthday), and both forms were accepted as possessive forms.

There are also overgeneralizations of the possessive (kindergarten's sign). This will be discussed in detail later.

Suppliance of -'s in the possessive noun phrase

Because so few instances of possessive noun phrases occur in some journals, not all students' suppliance ratios were included in the cross-sectional analysis, but are included in this section, and given in Table 9.28.

	Fall		Winter		Spring	
U Chal	1/3	33.3	2/4	50.0	3/6	50.0
Laura	1/2	50.0	0/3	0.0	2/6	33.3
Su Kyong	1/2	50.0	1/1	100	3/4	75.0
Michael	0/7	0.0	1/12	8.0	0/13	0.0
Andy	0/5	0.0	12/21	57.0	14/17	82.0
TOTAL	3/19	15.8	16/41	39.0	22/46	47.8

Table 9.28. Suppliance of possessive -'s in obligatory contexts.

There is a lot of individual variation in the frequency of occurrence of noun phrase possessives at all. For U Chal, Laura, and Su Kyong, it was necessary to go beyond the three sample periods to the three sections of the whole journal (corresponding to the sample periods; see Footnote 1 in Chapter Eight for an explanation) in order to get more instances, and there are still very few. But because there are so many possessives in Andy's and Michael's journals, I only used the sample periods, and even then the frequency far exceeded that of the other students. In their whole journal, there are at least twice as many instances as are shown here. They even have some complicated possessive constructions when writing about their families:

Andy: . . . my sister's boyfriend name . . .

Michael: . . . my father brother wife her daughter . . .

There is also a lot of individual variation in the suppliance of -'s once the N N construction is made, as Table 9.28 shows. Even though Michael frequently uses possessive noun phrases, he only writes the possessive suffix once during the whole year, and this is immediately after Mrs. Reed writes it:

T-65 Why do you think he wants to steal Uncle Quenton's papers?

S-66 . . . maybe Uncle Quenton's paper was a secret paper or somethings.

Frequently he uses long possessive noun phrases, either omitting the -'s or using a possessive pronoun:

. . . my mother big sister son . . .

. . . my father his brother wife . . .

So -'s is not a part of Michael's morpheme inventory. Even when Mrs. Reed models it for him, he does not pick it up:

S-70 . . . one time my father his brother wife she got three girls. So one time in the house her last daughter was crying like a radio . . .

T-70 Why did your father's brother's wife cry so loud like a radio?

S-71 You don't understand what I'm telling you. I mean is my father brother wife her daughter is crying like a radio not a mother.

Burmese does have a possessive particle that follows the possessor noun (Maung Ba ye saou = "Maung Ba's book"). Since this particle constitutes a separate syllable, Michael no doubt fails to notice the possessive suffix -*'s* in English. At the same time, as two of the examples above indicate, he may have transferred the function of *ye* as a marker of possession to the English possessive pronoun, so that he might write something like, "Maung Ba *her* book" rather than, "Maung Ba*'s* book." This structure appears only occasionally when he is writing about family members.

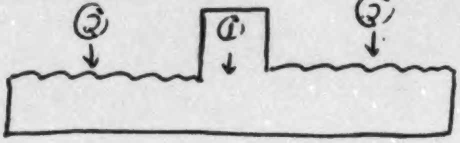
The two students who supply -*'s* the most frequently are Su Kyong and Andy, the Korean students. Korean has a possessive suffix on the possessor noun (Su Kyong-*e* chek = "Su Kyong's book"), but it is rarely said in casual conversation. Still, the suffix in English is salient for them. Andy not only uses -*'s* in obligatory contexts with high frequency, even writing things like, "Today is one's great great grandfather die day" and, "stick to one's own opinion," but he overgeneralizes the form to many other situations, as if he is applying a rule that whenever two nouns occur together, the first one must have -*'s*.

> Friday I am lend *Sompob's money*.
>
> Today in the morning my *kindergarten's sign* is finish.

Sometimes Andy uses a N's N construction when N of N or no possessive at all would be preferable:

> Today our room move to the library because our *room's window* fixed.

It would be better to write, "The window in our room was being fixed." Referring to a diagram that he has drawn and labelled, he writes:



One's power is small than *two's power*.

This comment on the diagram makes sense, but "One is less powerful than two" would have been preferable.

Hakuta (1976) found a similar pattern for possessive marking in Uguisu's speech that I found in Andy's journal. While Uguisu marked plurals very infrequently, she reached 90 percent accuracy on the possessive and overgeneralized the form to possessive pronouns (he's, they's) as well. Hakuta suggests that this could be a result of Japanese influence—in Japanese a postposed particle no appears in the same position as the -'s.

Possessive pronouns

As stated previously, possessive pronouns (my, her, our, etc.) usually appear in the journals in the correct form. Occasionally Michael omits my ("I don't know why stomach hurt.") and writes you instead of your ("What kind you dog is it?" "Thank you for you Easter card."). Again, Su Kyong and Andy demonstrate a pattern different from the other students. Occasionally, Su Kyong uses an -s suffix on third person pronouns ("I don't like hes name." "On shes birthday I have to . . ."). Andy occasionally writes you ("I take you bag.") and we and us instead of our ("We do we homework." "today us room move the library because us room's window fixed."). He always writes she ("I forgot the she name."). These patterns could also result from the influence of Korean. Usually no possessive suffix is added to the pronoun in casual speech. In careful speech and writing a suffix is added (as in ku-e chek = "his/her book"). This could be the reason for Su Kyong's use of hes and shes.

Summary

The rank ordering of possessive -'s suppliance is not at all uniform between this study and most previous studies (except Hakuta's) or among the students in this study. Small numbers and few subjects make it difficult to draw any firm conclusions, but it appears as if the frequency of possessive marking, both on the noun phrase and on the pronoun, is closely related to first language background. Andy and Su Kyong, both Koreans, show high incidences of -'s suppliance, while they have some difficulty with the possessive pronoun forms. Michael, the Burmese student, never supplies -'s, but displays only slight difficulty with the possessive pronoun. Laura and U Chal supply -'s infrequently, but their possessive pronoun forms are always correct.

It should be noted that lack of -'s does not mean that a student has no concept of the possessive. As has been pointed out by other researchers, the most salient feature of noun phrase possessive formation is the possessor noun + possessed noun construction (NN). Some dialects of English form the possessive in this way, with no -'s. The frequency with which the N N construction is used varies from student to student, but they all use it. Michael's complicated possessive constructions in S-70 and S-71 (p. 381) are a clear indication that he knows how to use the possessive. If we consider N N as the possessive form, all of the students quickly attain 100 percent accuracy on the possessive construction.

Changes over time in the use of the noun phrase morphemes

In this section, findings concerning the noun phrase morphemes discussed in this chapter are pulled together to determine to what extent there is uniformity between students in the use of these morphemes over time and what predictions can be made concerning their acquisition. Table 9.29 reviews individual and group percentages for suppliance of the noun phrase morphemes in obligatory contexts.

On the basis of the group scores it appears that improvement over ten months' time can be expected only in the suppliance of the indefinite article and the possessive -'s. There is no change in the use of the definite article, shown in Figure 9.11.

Correct the	Fall		Winter		Spring	
U Chal	50/57	87.7	67/75	92.0	51/52	98.1
Laura	6/10	60.0	40/40	100	35/35	100
Su Kyong	8/12	66.7	21/31	66.7	27/27	81.5
Michael	39/43	90.7	120/130	92.3	102/129	79.1
Andy	14/22	63.6	18/71	25.4	26/48	54.2
TOTAL	117/144	81.3	268/347	77.2	236/291	81.1
Correct a						
U Chal	4/11	36.3	17/20	85.0	13/13	100
Laura	0/13	0.0	16/17	94.1	14/14	100
Su Kyong	0/8	0.0	0/8	0.0	3/8	37.5
Michael	3/8	37.5	0/14	16/43	37.2	
Andy	7/14	50.0	2/32	6.3	7/25	28.0
TOTAL	11/54	20.4	35/91	38.5	53/103	51.5
Possessive						
U Chal	1/3	33.0	2/4	50.0	3/6	50.0
Laura	1/2	50.0	0/3	0.0	2/6	33.0
Su Kyong	1/2	50.0	1/1	100	3/4	75.0
Michael	0/7	0.0	1/12	8.0	0/13	0.0
Andy	0/5	0.0	12/21	57.0	14/17	82.0
Total	3/19	15.8	16/41	39.0	22/46	47.8

Table 9.29. Suppliance of noun-related morphemes in obligatory contexts.

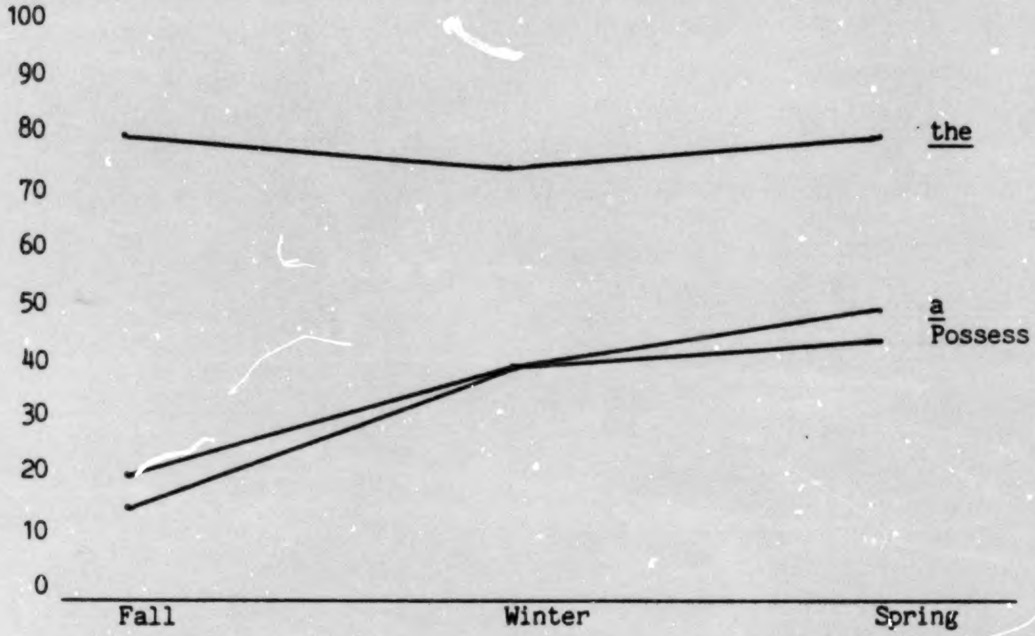


Figure 9.11. Change over time in suppliance of noun-related morphemes. Group scores.

However, individual patterns, shown in Figure 9.12, vary dramatically.

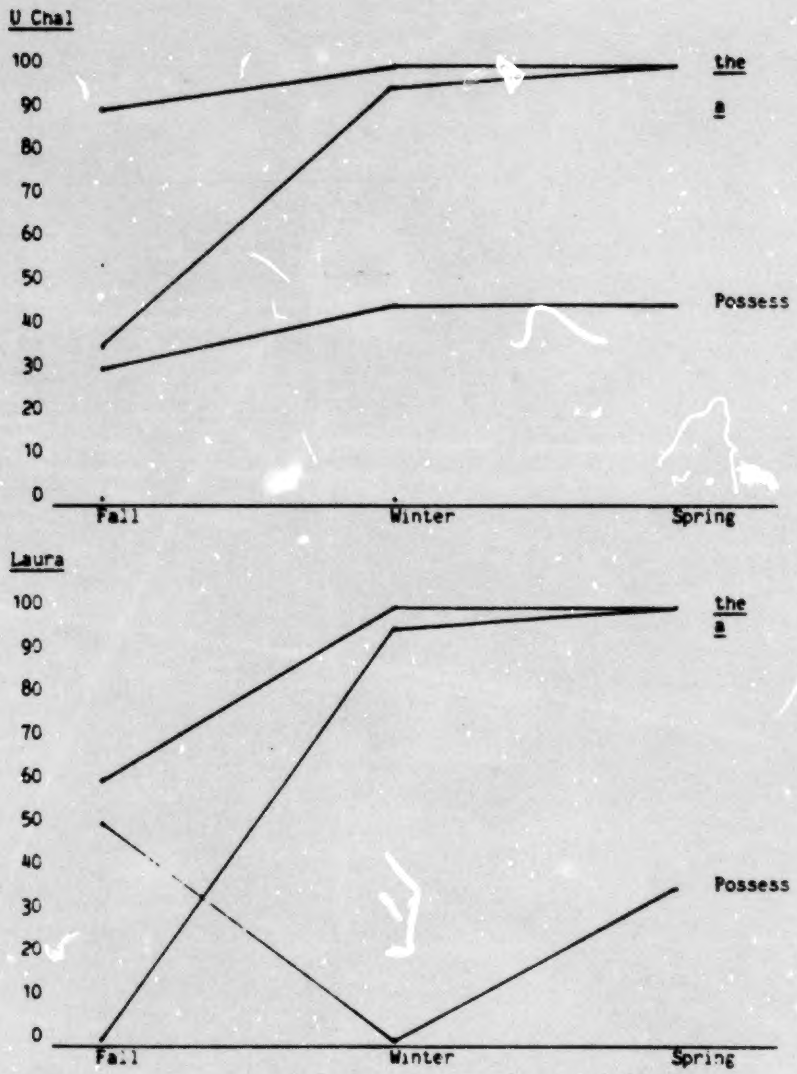


Figure 9.12. Change over time in suppliance of noun-related morphemes in obligatory contexts. Individual students.

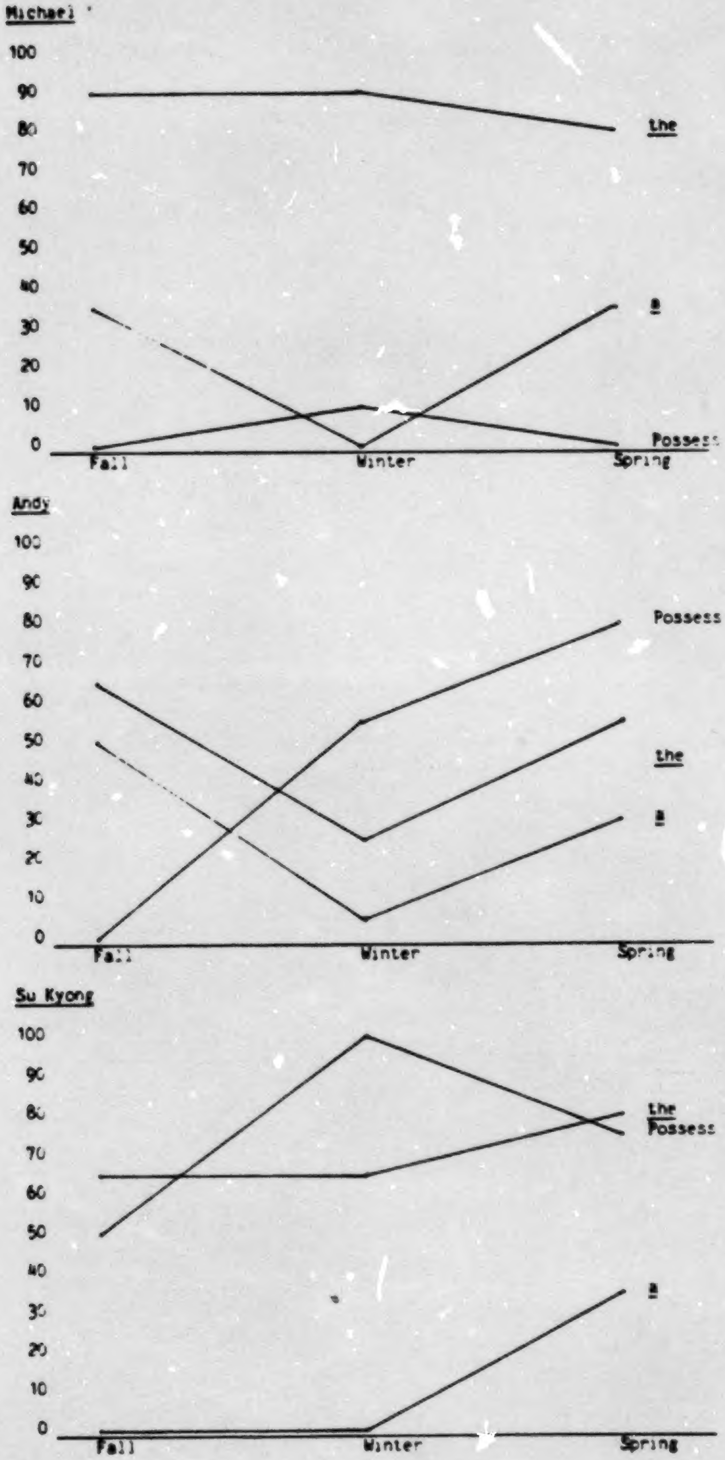


Figure 9.12, continued.

Table 9.30 summarizes the morphemes that show change over time, based on a criterion of change of 10 percent or more difference from the fall to spring. Whereas with the verb phrase morphemes a great deal more uniformity was found among the students in the morphemes that improve over time, with the noun phrase morphemes there is evidence of more individual variability. There is also much more evidence of improvement over time in the use of the verb phrase morphemes. None of the students show improvement on all of the noun phrase morphemes. Michael and Andy have difficulty with the articles, with quite a bit of backsliding in the winter (we have discussed the difficulties that the students have with the use of articles). In the spring they appear to be back on their way to mastery.

	5 students	U Chal	Su Kyong	Laura	Michael	Andy
the	0	+	+	+	-	-
a	+	+	+	+	0	-
Possess	+	+	+	-	0	+

+ = improvement of at least 10%
- = decrease of at least 10%
0 = no change of at least 10%

Table 9.30. Morphemes that change over time by group and individual scores.

In summary, while it appears, based on the dialogue journal writing of the five students in this study, that improvement can be expected over time in the use of some of the noun phrase morphemes, the predictions that are possible to make about improvement are much less firm than those that could be made for the verb phrase morphemes.

There is substantial evidence here of the importance of first language structure in the learning of English as a second language. The possessive morpheme is not syllabic and is totally redundant, but Su Kyong and Andy supply the possessive more than any other morpheme. Article suppliance seems to be related to first language background as well.

Frequency of occurrence of morphemes seems to have less to do with acquisition of the noun phrase morphemes than does language background. Contexts for the possessive suffix occur infrequently in these data, but the Korean students supply it often. Contexts for the occur frequently, but only those students with articles in their first language show increased facility in using it.

Conclusions

In this chapter a longitudinal analysis of noun phrase and verb phrase morphology has examined: methodological considerations in morpheme analysis; linguistic factors that appear to contribute to morpheme use; and individual variation and change over time in morpheme use.

We have found that certain linguistic constraints appear to contribute to similarities among all of the learners in these written productions. These are generally the same (except for phonological factors) as those that have been found to contribute to similarities in spoken productions: 1) perceptual salience of the morpheme. The more overtly marked forms--those which constitute a separate syllable (-ing, for example), involve a change in the word stem (e.g., suppletive forms for irregular past, such as went), or tend to appear first in a sentence or on a verbal auxiliary (such as did in yes/no questions and progressive auxiliary be, respectively)--are supplied more frequently and demonstrate more improvement over time than forms which are non-syllabic, cause no stem change (regular past, for example), and do not occupy a prominent place in the sentence or verb phrase; 2) redundancy of the morpheme, which promotes morpheme absence (such as possessive -'s in the noun phrase); 3) frequency of occurrence of the forms. The factors that appear to moderate these similarities and to cause differences among individual learners are: 1) first language background; and 2) individual learning strategies. First language transfer appears to influence, for example, the use of articles and overgeneralizations of BE. The presence of articles in the first language of the students in this study coincides with correct suppliance of articles in English. Andy's frequent misuse of BE appears to result from his misinterpretation of BE as the subject and topic markers which occur in Korean. First language transfer also appears to influence progressive formations, and the use of possessive -'s.

Individual learning strategies are evident, for example, in Andy's early and almost categorical use of possessive -'s when all other students use it only infrequently and in students' rote learning of individual words in a particular form. In most cases, these words are quite different from student to student.

Thus, it appears that the patterns found here result from the interaction of several factors. Universal cognitive processes involved in the learning of a language and factors in the linguistic input to the learner contribute to similar acquisition patterns among all learners of English, no matter what their language background or individual learning strategies. At the same time, the learner's previous language background and the imitation and rote learning of particular lexical items or particular forms by individual learners moderate these similarities and produce differences among learners.

The findings of this study suggest that the acquisition of English morphology in writing proceeds in much the same manner as it does in speech. The rank morpheme orders found in this study are similar to those found in studies of speech data in which the focus is not on form, and many of the factors that have been found to influence morpheme production in speech were found to be operative in these written data as well.

The findings of this study also suggest implications regarding methods of investigating morpheme acquisition. The primary focus of many morpheme studies in the past (some of which are discussed in Chapter Eight) has been on the scoring of morphemes and the quantification of results. Consequently, many key aspects of the acquisitional process are obscured. Evidence of first language transfer, for example, was not apparent in these data when the methods used in many of the morpheme studies were replicated and the analysis was purely quantitative (as in Chapter Eight). First language transfer appeared, instead, in the longitudinal analysis in this chapter, where the focus was less on quantification and rank order of the morphemes and more on the identification of acquisitional patterns. Thus, it is clear in this study that the methods of analysis used affected the degree to which first language influence was apparent.

Quantification alone also obscures the importance of certain strategies used by second language learners. In this study, when we took a closer look at how certain forms were used, imitation and rote learning of individual lexical items became apparent as important learning strategies.

The method of analysis used in this study even affected results pertaining to morpheme rank orders. Whether or not the rank order outlined by Krashen applied to these data depended, in some cases, on the method of analysis used. It was found, for example, with progressive auxiliary and -ing, that when forms that are ambiguous as far as progressive is concerned (e.g., "I am go . . .) are excluded from the analysis, progressive -ing appears to be consistently supplied before progressive auxiliary BE, consistent with the natural order. However, when such ambiguous forms are included in the analysis, BE as copula and as progressive auxiliary show evidence of being supplied before -ing in the early stages of language acquisition.

The last point to be made concerning analytical methods has to do with the reporting of research results. Since one of the goals of second language acquisition research is to make comparisons across studies and to draw generalizations from those comparisons, researchers must carefully outline their analytical methods, giving details about decisions concerning which forms are considered ambiguous, how ambiguous structures influence results, how scoring is done, etc. It is only with such careful, detailed reporting of the analytical process that valid comparisons can be made of the research products.

Finally, the findings of this study suggest implications for the promotion of writing development in English as a second language.

First, although speaking and writing are certainly different communication skills in some ways, it is possible that they can be developed at the same time in the classroom setting. Traditionally, educators have focused on speaking skills first and reserved writing until later, with the result that in classrooms where English or some other language is learned as a second or foreign language, writing is often postponed until a considerable degree of oral proficiency has been attained. The dialogue journal writing of the students in this study, who knew very little English on the first day of school, suggests that even beginning ESL learners can express themselves in writing, if at a very elementary level, and that their proficiency with the written forms of English will increase gradually in a natural process. As the writing develops, it is very possible that patterns for morpheme use that are similar to the patterns found in informal speech will emerge. If further research demonstrates that there is a consistent pattern for morpheme acquisition in writing similar to speech, there may be no need to follow a particular sequence to introduce the use of some morphemes in writing (as has already been suggested for speech), for the rules for their use will arise naturally in the process of communication, and will be assimilated as the students are ready to assimilate them. Certain morphemes will be used early, while others may be used infrequently or never used in informal contexts throughout the entire school year.

In this study salient morphemes such as past irregular and progressive auxiliary and -ing showed dramatic improvements over time. Also, the use of did to begin yes/no questions was frequent in the teacher's writing and some students quickly picked up this question form. These are the same morphemes that rank higher in all of the cross-sectional morpheme studies. The rules for use of these morphemes may not need to be taught at all, as they will be quickly picked up and used in the process of communication.

Other morphemes such as past regular, third singular, plural, and possessive not only were supplied infrequently in the journals by the students, but demonstrated very little improvement over time even though they were modeled frequently in the teacher's writing. The rules for the use of these morphemes may need to be taught and drilled, and they might be used in more monitored writing such as tests and compositions long before they appear in more informal writing.

Dialogue journal writing may prove to be a particularly important practice in the development of beginning literacy skills, as reading and writing skills can develop naturally along with speaking and listening, from the very beginning of the learning process. With dialogue journals, whose content grows out of the everyday experiences of the writers, students can begin reading and writing at much lower language proficiency levels than other more decontextualized materials and exercises may allow. At the same time, the dialogue journal may be the first opportunity for students to discover that the written word is a tool for expressing thoughts and finding out about the world.

Notes to Chapter Nine

[1] Illustrative examples are taken from the students' and teacher's entries in the dialogue journals of the students in this study.

[2] Only a couple of studies of tense marking in non-test situations have found that regular verbs are inflected for past before irregular verbs (Dulay and Burt, 1974a; Christison, 1979).

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